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OFFICE OF POPULATION CENSUSES AND SURVEYS
SOCIAL SURVEY DIVISION

Scottish drinking habits

A survey carried out for the
Scottish Home and Health Department

Susan E Dight

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OFFICE OF POPULATION CENSUSES AND SURVEYS
SOCIAL SURVEY DIVISION

Scottish drinking habits

A Survey of Scottish drinking habits and attitudes towards alcohol carried out in 1972 for the Scottish Home and Health Department

Susan E Dight

London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office

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Summary of the report

Introduction (Chapter 1)

References

1 This survey was commissioned by the Scottish Home and Health Department. Its purpose is to enquire into the drinking habits of the Scottish population and to examine their attitudes both towards their own drinking and towards drinking in general, drunkenness and alcoholism. This information should provide a useful basis for planning any health education campaigns concerned with these topics. The survey results can also be used to help identify various 'target groups' amongst whom relatively heavy drinking is more prevalent than average and to whom it might be thought desirable to direct health education.

Sections 1.1 & 1.2 pp.1-2

2 A representative national sample of the Scottish population (aged 17½ and over) was drawn from the Electoral Registers. Twice as many men as women were selected for the sample so that we would obtain a sufficiently large number of drinkers to allow for detailed analyses of their drinking habits. However, the overall results were made representative of the population by compensatory reweighting. Interviews were completed with 2453 members of the public - an 80% response rate.

Sections 1.4 & 1.5 pp.3-5 Technical sampling report p.307

3 The report, like the questionnaire, is basically divided into two parts; the first part is concerned with detailed analyses of the drinking habits of the Scottish population (Chapters 2-6) and the second part is concerned with their attitudes towards a number of topics covering drinking, drunkenness and alcoholism (Chapters 7-12). Chapter 13 consists of a special analysis of the characteristics of groups with a high incidence of heavy drinking.

Section 1.3 p.2

Part I: Drinking habits

The prevalence of alcoholic drinking in Scotland (Chapter 2)

4 Drinking is much more prevalent amongst men than women in Scotland. The proportions in each sex who drink at least once a week (regular drinkers), less than once a week (occasional drinkers), or not at all (non-drinkers) are as follows:-

Sections 2.2 & 2.3 & Fig.2(a) pp. 11-13

	Men	Women
Regular drinkers	74%	46%
Occasional drinkers	22%	42%
Non-drinkers	5%	12%
	100%	100%

References

5 The social characteristic most associated with regular drinking is having a high proportion of friends (both male and female) who also drink. Thus as many as 89% of men and 68% of women who state that all of their male and female friends drink are themselves regular drinkers. Amongst men only, those who also state that at least half of their male drinking friends are heavy drinkers are the most likely to be regular drinkers (91%).

Section 2.12 & Fig.2(c) pp.29-36

6 The younger the informant the more likely is he/she to be a regular drinker - 87% of men and 60% of women aged 17-30 are regular drinkers.

Section 2.3 p.13

Further analysis showed that men under 31 who are also single are very likely to be regular drinkers - 90%.

Section 2.4 p.15

7 Amongst women the higher the social class [on a scale running from Professional (class 1) to Semi and unskilled manual (class 5)] the higher the prevalence of regular drinking - rising from 28% amongst those in class 5 to 74% amongst those in class 1. Amongst men, however, there are no appreciable differences in the proportion of regular drinkers found in each social class.

Section 2.5 p.17

8 Heavy smokers are very likely to be regular drinkers. 82% of men and 71% of women who smoke at least 25 cigarettes a day are regular drinkers.

Section 2.11 p.29

The social and demographic background of regular drinkers (Chapter 3)

9 Besides the greater prevalence of regular drinking amongst men, we also found that they are more likely than women to consume large quantities of alcohol. The average amount drunk per week by male regular drinkers is 20.5 alcoholic units compared with 4.8 alcoholic units for female regular drinkers. (1 alcoholic unit is roughly equivalent to ½ pint of beer/lager or a single measure of spirits.) In fact, the maximum amount that was drunk by a man was 189 alcoholic units per week while for a woman it was 44 alcoholic units.

Sections 3.2-3.5 & Fig.3(a) pp.40-45 Conversion table for all beverages p .41

10 30% of all the alcohol drunk in a typical week in Scotland is consumed by only 3% of the total population (5% of all regular drinkers). This group consists entirely of men and is made up of all those who consume at least 51 alcoholic units per week.

Section 3.4 & Fig.3(c) pp.44 & 46

11 The main social characteristic indicating an above average level of consumption amongst men is having a high proportion of male friends who are heavy drinkers. 37.9 alcoholic units per week is the average amount consumed by men who state that all of their male friends drink and at least half of them are heavy drinkers.

Section 3.13 p.54

12 Amongst women, smoking at least 20 cigarettes a day is the social characteristic which indicates the highest average level of consumption - 7.4 alcoholic units per week.

Section 3.12 p.52

		References
13	As with the prevalence of regular drinking the younger the informant the more likely is he/she to consume an above average amount. Single people in all age groups, are more likely than their married counterparts to have a high level of alcoholic consumption.	*Section 3.5 & Fig.3(d) pp.45-46* *Section 3.6 p.46*
14	In contrast to the findings relating to the incidence of regular drinking, the lower the social class the higher the average amount of alcohol consumed by those who drink regularly - 25.1 and 5.6 alcoholic units per week for men and women respectively in the Semi and unskilled manual class.	*Section 3.7 & Fig.3(e) pp.45 & 49*

Parental drinking habits (Chapter 4)

15	We have found that the proportion of mothers who drink when their children are young has increased sharply over the last 3 generations from 24% (mothers of informants now aged over 51) to 59% (mothers of informants now aged 17-30). Amongst the current generation (ie. informants who are themselves parents of young children) we found that 91% of the mothers and 92% of the fathers drink. Thus, whereas approximately 50 years ago only 24% of mothers drank compared to 68% of fathers, it is now the norm in most families for both parents to drink.	*Section 4.2 p.62*
16	The more frequently their mothers drank the more likely are informants (ie sons and daughters) to be regular drinkers. Fathers' frequency of drinking is also directly related to the prevalence of regular drinking amongst sons but not amongst daughters. The same relationships exist between parental drinking habits and the actual amount of alcohol consumed by sons and daughters who are regular drinkers.	*Sections 4.4 & 4.5 p.65* *Sections 4.7 & 4.8 pp.62-73*
17	We found that where fathers drank very frequently (4 or more times a week), but mothers did not drink, sex stereotyping of behaviour tended to occur amongst their offspring. Thus sons exposed to this parental drinking pattern drink the greatest quantities of alcohol (mean = 26.2 alcoholic units). On the other hand, daughters exposed to the same pattern drink the lowest quantities of alcohol (mean = 2.9 alcoholic units) and are also the least likely to be regular drinkers (only 29% of this group).	*Section 4.6 p.69* *Section 4.9 p.73*

Origin and development of drinking behaviour (Chapter 5)

18	Only 2% of men and 6% of women have *never* tasted an alcoholic drink. Men tend to have their first drink at a younger age than women (average = 18.2 compared with 21.8 years). The higher the current level of alcoholic consumption the younger the age at which informants tasted their first drink (average = 15.7 years for those men now consuming 51 or more alcoholic units per week).	*Section 5.4 p.80* *Section 5.5 p.83*
19	88% of men and 68% of women say that they have reached the stage of drinking as a normal habit. As with the age at first drink, the age when drinking becomes a normal habit is earlier for men than women and is earlier the higher the current rate of alcoholic consumption (average = 17.9 years for those men now consuming 51 or more alcoholic units per week).	*Section 5.11 p.89* *Section 5.12 & Fig.5 pp.91 & 93*

		References
20	There is a strong own sex preference in the company with whom informants have both their first drink and start drinking as a normal habit. For both sexes the company is likely to be friends rather than relatives.	*Sections 5.6 p.84 & 5.13 p.94*
21	Men are more likely to say that their drinking has decreased rather than increased over the last 10 years (32% compared with 14%). Women, however, are as likely to say their drinking has increased as that it has decreased. This is consistent with other results in suggesting that for men there is a peak of drinking in early adulthood (17-30) after which it declines while for women the peak appears to be at 31-50 years of age. In contrast to their views on their own drinking, 84% in both sexes consider that more people are drinking in Scotland now compared with 10 years ago.	*Section 5.16 p.99*

Detailed analysis of 'last week's' drinking (Chapter 6)

22	Saturday is by far the most popular day for drinking, followed by Friday and then Sunday. The most popular time of day for drinking is the evening (defined as 5.00 to 10.00 pm). Lunch-time drinking is frequently reported by men but not by women. 'All day' ie continuous drinking, is only found amongst men who consume at least 21 alcoholic units per week.	*Sections 6.4 & 6.5 pp.111-116*
23	Beer is the main beverage drunk by men whatever their rate of alcoholic consumption whereas for women spirits, particularly whisky, gin, vodka and rum, are the most popular beverages.	*Section 6.6 p.116 & Fig.6(a)p.109*
24	While men mainly drink in pubs, women more frequently drink at home or in other people's homes. For both sexes pub drinking is more common amongst those who drink a lot.	*Section 6.7 p.119*
25	Men and women drink most frequently in the company of 1-3 other people. For men these other people are most likely to be male but for women they are most likely to be evenly divided between the sexes. The greater the amount of alcohol consumed the more likely are men to drink in all male company. Whereas most men drink mainly in the company of male friends most women tend to drink in the company of their husbands. (NB The number of drinking occasions men spend with their wives is very small in comparison with their total number of drinking occasions - thus most are spent with male friends.)	*Section 6.8 p.119*

Part II: Attitudes towards drinking

Perception of own drinking, heavy and light drinking (Chapter 7)

26	Informants tend to underestimate their own drinking when asked to compare it with the average amount consumed. As is shown by the proportions below the majority of male and female drinkers perceive their own drinking as below average and very few as above average.	*Section 7.2 p.143*

	Men	Women
Above average	7%	1%
About average	36%	13%
Below average	57%	86%
All drinkers	100%	100%

References

Only 1% of all male drinkers acknowledged that they drank heavily - even amongst our heaviest drinking group (ie 51 or more alcoholic units per week) only 11% reported that they drank heavily.

27 The vast majority of male and female drinkers (92% and 96% respectively) assert that they are quite satisfied with the amount they drink. Only 5% and 2% of male and female drinkers are willing to state that they would like to drink less. Moreover, of the group comprising our heaviest drinkers (51 or more units per week) only 13% consider that they would like to reduce their drinking. *Section 7.5 p.152*

28 Informants' overall average estimates of the rate of consumption which defines 'heavy drinking' are 30.2 pints for male beer drinkers and 2.2 bottles for male whisky drinkers. This amount is equivalent to 60 alcoholic units for both beverages so that the great majority of our heaviest drinking group (those who consume 51 or more alcoholic units per week) and 5% of all male drinkers would be identified as 'heavy drinkers' by the public. However, only 11% of our heaviest drinking group and 1% of all male drinkers actually saw themselves as heavy drinkers (see 26 above). *Section 7.7 p.155*

29 The greater the amount of alcohol informants themselves consume the higher are their estimates of the rate of consumption which constitutes heavy drinking. The manual classes tend to give higher estimates of heavy drinking than the non-manual classes. *Section 7.8 p. 155 Section 7.10 p. 159*

30 Informants' overall average estimates for the level up to which drinking is seen as 'light drinking' are 9.6 pints of beer (19 alcoholic units) and 0.5 bottles of whisky (13 alcoholic units). It seems, therefore, that informants must view whisky as a more potent beverage than beer when taken in small quantities. If we apply the average of these two estimates (ie 16 alcoholic units) to the distribution of male drinkers we would identify 69% of them as light drinkers. *Section 7.11 p.160*

Motivation for drinking (Chapter 8)

31 The two most popular reasons given for drinking are 'to celebrate' (endorsed by 75% and 78% of male and female drinkers respectively) and 'to be sociable' (endorsed by 65% and 58% respectively). *Section 8.2 p.164*

32 By factor analysing the list of reasons for drinking we found that there were 3 main types of motivation for drinking, namely, 'psychological affect' (ie using alcohol for a drug effect), 'intrinsic enjoyment' (ie actual enjoyment of the beverage itself) and 'social obligation' (ie drinking in response to social pressures). [These three factors are very similar to those found by Edwards et al in their study of drinking in a London suburb.] *Section 8.4 p.167 Annex to Chapter 8 p.183*

33 Overall, men are more strongly motivated to drink for intrinsic enjoyment and psychological affect reasons than women although there is no difference between the sexes in social obligation motivation. However, when we compared men and women who drank equivalent quantities of alcohol we found that women were consistently more likely to be motivated by psychological affect reasons which implies a greater psychological dependence on alcohol. It must be remembered, of course, that in this study we did not find any female heavy drinkers but this greater dependence on alcohol may be a cause for concern if the rate of female alcoholic consumption continues to rise.

Section 8.5
Fig.8(a)
pp.170–174

References

34 Social obligation motivation to drink is highest amongst those who drink low or moderate quantities of alcohol whereas both psychological affect and intrinsic enjoyment motivation increase directly with the amount of alcohol consumed.

Section 8.5
Fig.8(a)
pp.170–174

35 The three types of motivation are differentially represented amongst the social classes. Intrinsic enjoyment motivation is most strongly in evidence in the Professional class while social obligation motivation is more likely to be found in the non-manual group as a whole rather than the manual group. On the other hand, men in the Semi and unskilled manual class have the strongest psychological affect motivation.

Section 8.7
p.179

General attitudes towards drinking, drunkenness and alcoholism (Chapter 9)

36 In both sexes there were majorities who agreed not only with 'anti'-drinking statements but also with 'pro'-drinking statements. Women tended to be consistently more disapproving towards both drinking and drunkenness than men. A majority of men, but not of women, agreed with the statements "it does people good to get drunk once in a while" and "getting drunk is a good way of forgetting your troubles for a while".

Sections
9.2 & 9.3
pp.188–191

37 Majorities of both men and women conceded that alcoholism was an illness which could be treated but they were unwilling to accept that public money should be spent on facilities for alcoholics. It seems likely that the public views such expenditure more as charity given to a few (perhaps undeserving) individuals, than as an investment which might yield benefits to the economy eg by reducing absenteeism and inefficiency and improving safety standards in industry.

Section 9.4
p.191

38 A factor analysis of all the attitude statements relating to drinking, drunkenness and alcoholism identified four basic independent attitudes towards drinking. These were 'moral disapproval of drinking' (Factor 1), the belief that 'drinking is pleasurable' (Factor 2), the belief that 'alcoholics can be helped' (Factor 3), and 'disapproval of drunkenness' (Factor 4).

Section 9.5
p.194
Annex to
Chapter 9
p.211

39 Compared with women, men were generally less disapproving of both drinking and drunkenness, more likely to consider drinking as pleasurable but less likely to believe that alcoholics can be helped. As we would expect, those who drink the most are the least likely to express disapproval and most convinced that drinking is pleasurable.

Section 9.6
Fig.9(a)
pp.195–200

40	Younger people tend to be less disapproving of both drinking and drunkenness but more optimistic that alcoholics can be helped than their elders.	*Section 9.7 & Fig.9(b) pp.200-204*
41	The manual group has a more extreme and more ambivalent view of drinking than the non-manual group. The former are more likely to disapprove of drinking but contrarily are also more likely to consider drinking as pleasurable and less likely to disapprove of drunkenness. It seems clear that there is a greater sense of conflict about drinking amongst the working class (ie manual group) than the middle class (ie non-manual group).	*Section 9.8 p.205*

Attitudes towards drinking and health (Chapter 10)

		References
42	The great majority of men and women (96%) accept that drinking can damage health but, at the same time, 42% of men and 38% of women believe that drinking can also have good effects on health. Even amongst our heaviest drinking group there is overwhelming recognition that drinking can damage health.	*Section 10.2 p.215*
43	Older people (particularly women aged 51 or over) are more likely than younger people to believe that drinking can have good effects and are slightly less inclined to believe that it can damage health.	*Section 10.3 p.217*
44	In both sexes the non-manual group are more inclined than the manual group to believe that drinking can have good effects on health. However, equally high proportions in all social classes believe that drinking can damage health.	*Section 10.4 p.217*
45	The types of good effect most frequently mentioned by informants were that alcohol was a food (particularly stout), it enriched the blood, it acted as a stimulant and it soothed the nerves (particulary whisky). Many informants mentioned that they thought alcohol was particularly good for old people.	*Section 10.5 p.220*
46	The main way in which drinking could harm health was thought to be damage to the liver - mentioned by 39% and 40% of men and women respectively. Other harmful effects frequently mentioned were mental deterioration, stomach complaints, heart complaints, malnutrition and kidney/bladder complaints.	*Section 10.6 p.222*
47	When asked to compare the harmful effects caused by drinking and smoking the majority said that smoking was more harmful to health - 63% of men, 45% of women. (Only 25% of men and 33% of women thought that drinking was more harmful than smoking to health.) In general informants' opinions about which is more harmful to health reflected, and perhaps justified their own behaviour, ie those who drank but did not smoke considered smoking to be more harmful and vice-versa. However, if informants both smoked and drank they generally felt that smoking was more harmful.	*Sections 10.7-10.9 pp.223-228*

Experience of public drunkenness and attitudes towards its control (Chapter 11)

48 Public drunkenness is a fairly common sight in Scotland - 61% of men and 48% of women report that they see incidents of public drunkenness at least once a week in the streets where they live. The heaviest drinkers are those who most frequently observe incidents of public drunkenness.

Sections 11.2-11.3 pp.230-233

49 Men and women living in the Central Belt (ie Western, Central and South East regions) tend to observe an above average rate of public drunkenness in their areas.

Section 11.2 p.230

50 Younger people report a higher frequency of public drunkenness in their areas than older people - this is probably due to the former's more frequent attendance at pubs, hotels, clubs, etc.

Section 11.4 p.233 Annex to Chapter 6 p.126

References

51 The working class (manual group) is more likely to see frequent incidents of public drunkenness in its area than the middle class (non-manual group). This can partly be explained by the former's greater tendency to go out to drink in pubs, hotels, etc but is also likely to be explained by the different types of reisdential area in which the two classes live.

Section 11.5 p.237 Annex to Chapter 6 p.126

52 There is some general dissatisfaction with the way drunks are dealt with by the authorities - 56% of men and 48% of women expressed general dissatisfaction. The great majority of these people would like to see stiffer penalties for drunkenness offences and restrictive measures introduced such as banning known drunks from pubs and hotels.

Sections 11.6 - 11.7 pp.238-241

Public knowledge and experience of alcoholics (Chapter 12)

53 98% of men and women said that they knew what was meant by the term 'alcoholic' and were able to attempt some sort of definition. The notion of 'compulsion to drink' was the main characteristic of alcoholics mentioned by informants.

Section 12.2 p.245

54 The great majority (84% of men, 74% of women) held the view that there were differences between an alcoholic and a heavy drinker. The basic difference, as seen by informants, was that a heavy drinker, although he drank a lot, could control his drinking whereas an alcoholic could not.

Sections 12.3 & 12.4 p.248

55 The Scottish public seems to be well acquainted with the problem of alcoholism - 53% of men and 37% of women claimed that they knew, or had known, personally at least one alcoholic.
In general, those who drank a lot were most likely to know alcoholics.
In addition, those aged 31-50 and those in the Professional and Internediate classes had a greater than average chance of knowing alcoholics.

Section 12.5 p.248

56 Most alcoholics known personally by informants were men and they were usually their friends or acqaintances. However, some were members of their immediate families, particularly fathers or brothers, and in 4 cases the alcoholics were their spouses.

Section 12.6 p.252

57 The acquaintanceship with these alcoholics seems to have had quite a dramatic effect on informants' own drinking - 85% said they had reduced their drinking or had been generally put off drinking.

Section 12.7 p.260

58 Almost a half of informants thought that if they knew someone in their family was becoming an alcoholic then they would advise the alcoholic to see a doctor.
When informants were asked to name all the places where they knew an alcoholic could go for help 60% mentioned Alcoholics Anonymous, 15% the Samaritans and another 12% mentioned that there were special clinics/units/hospitals for alcoholics.

Section 12.8 p.260

Characteristics of groups with a high incidence of heavy drinking (Chapter 13)

References

59 As a result of a special analysis of the characteristics of heavy drinkers (defined as those who consume 51 or more alcoholic units per week) we found that there was a very high incidence of heavy drinking amongst men in the manual classes, aged 17-30, whose fathers drank at least twice a week (when informants were young), whose male friends are most likely to be heavy drinkers and who themselves were heavy smokers (at least 25 a day).
Overall, only 6% of men were categorised as heavy drinkers but amongst those aged 17-30 in the manual classes this proportion rose to 15%. Since this group is easy to identify and, in fact, contains almost half of all heavy drinkers it might be thought desirable to direct health education communications towards them.
The best single indicator of heavy drinking was found to he heavy smoking.

Sections 13.3 -13.4 pp.270-279

1 Introduction and survey method

1.1 Background to the survey

Over the last few years there has been growing concern over the steady increase in the number of known alcholics and of persons with serious drinking problems in Britain. It has been shown that various indices of alcohol abuse, such as the number of admissions to psychiatric hospitals on account of alcoholism, the number of deaths from cirrhosis of the liver and the number of offences connected with drunkenness are all on the increase[1]. While the validity of any one of these as an index of the true level of problem drinking might be challenged, collectively they suggest very strongly that alcohol abuse is increasing. Associated with this trend, though not necessarily because of it, there has also been a steady rise in the total volume of alcoholic beverages consumed in Britain in recent years.

However, there has been more concern over the drinking problem in Scotland than in England and Wales since all the indices of alcohol abuse are significantly higher in the former country than in the latter. In view of this, the Scottish Home and Health Department decided to plan a programme of health education aimed at reducing the problem of alcohol abuse. This programme, which has been administered by the Scottish Health Education Unit (SHEU), is concerned with alleviating the problems of those at present suffering from alcoholism, firstly by encouraging them, or their families on their behalf, to seek treatment and secondly by educating the public in general about the nature of alcoholism. A further, and more ambitious, part of the programme is aimed at preventing alcoholism by persuading the general public to adopt a more moderate approach towards drinking.

In order to carry out effective health education policies it is clearly necessary, first of all, to obtain information on the actual drinking habits and attitudes towards drinking of the Scottish population. With this information the alcoholism problem can be seen in perspective and the extent to which changes in attitudes towards drinking are required can be ascertained. On a more fundamental level it is also necessary to investigate drinking behaviour amongst children and young people so that knowledge can be obtained about the early development of drinking behaviour and drinking problems. To meet these needs the Scottish Home and Health Department has commissioned a series of research projects enquiring into the drinking behaviour of specific groups of the population.

Two surveys have already been carried out which enquired into the development of drinking habits amongst young people in Glasgow; the first relates to children aged 5 - 10 years[2], and the second relates to teenagers aged 14-17 years[3]. The present survey is concerned with providing a picture of the drinking habits and the knowledge and beliefs about drinking, drunkenness and alcoholism amongst the whole of the Scottish population aged 18 and over.

[1] *Notes on Alcohol and Alcoholism published by B. Edsall & Co. Ltd., pp 1-19, Alcohol: In the Life and Health of a Nation, by M.M. Glatt.*

[2] *Children & Alcohol (A developmental study in Glasgow) by Gustav Jahoda, Volume I.*

[3] *Teenagers & Alcohol (A developmental study in Glasgow) by John Davies & Barrie Stacey, Volume II.*

1.2 The purpose of the survey

The survey was accordingly designed with the aim of collecting information relevant to two main aspects of drinking, namely:-

(i) The actual drinking habits of the general public - this covers not only the types of people who drink but also such things as the frequency of alcoholic drinking and the quantities consumed, the contexts and circumstances in which drinking takes place and so on.

(ii) The prevailing attitudes and beliefs of the general public on a whole range of topics concerned with drinking, drunkenness and alcoholism, including their explanation of and their feelings towards their own particular drinking habits.

While these two aspects of drinking behaviour can usefully be distinguished, a further aim of the survey is to establish how far these different aspects are related. Thus, it is intended to show, for example, whether or not non-drinkers, light drinkers and heavy drinkers differ in their attitudes and beliefs about drinking.

It is hoped that health educators will be able to use this information to influence climates of opinion on drinking, alcoholism etc. which may lead to changes in actual drinking behaviour both within specific 'at risk' groups of the population and more generally amongst the public at large.

Thus, the focus of the present survey is upon the distribution of drinking habits amongst the adult population, most of whom consume relatively small or moderate amounts of alcohol. However, we are able to identify within the sample a small group of individuals who can be classified as relatively heavy drinkers and who can be compared and contrasted with those who consume lesser amounts of alcohol and with abstainers. It must be pointed out, however, that this group of relatively heavy drinkers do not represent alcoholics or even potential alcoholics as our definition of a relatively heavy drinker is based simply on the amount of alcohol consumed. Thus this survey does not attempt to say anything about the aetiology or the prevalence of alcoholism.

Since these latter topics are clearly vital ones from the point of view of radical attempts to understand and combat alcoholism, it is worth spelling out why they cannot be adequately covered by an approach such as the present one which relies upon large-scale survey methods applicable to the general population.

The first and most important reason arises from the fact that alcoholics are especially likely, because of their often irregular and unstable way of life, to be omitted from the population listings (e.g. Electoral Registers) which have to be used for survey sampling purposes. Moreover, even if included in a survey sample, they are for the same reasons likely to be difficult to trace or unwilling to cooperate. Finally, some significant proportion of alcoholics will, at any given time, be resident in institutions such as mental hospitals and although it is theoretically possible to include such places in a sample they are usually excluded because of the many practical difficulties of interviewing their residents.

A second important reason is that, even if it were possible to obtain a sample in which alcoholics and problem drinkers were represented in the correct proportions in which they occur in the population, the number of such individuals in the sample would be insufficient for any detailed analysis because their total number in the population is relatively very small. Not only this, to do justice to the special problems of alcoholics we would have had to ask a series of questions which would have been inappropriate (and perhaps even offensive) to members of the general public. If studies are to be carried out on the topic of alcoholism or problem drinking then it is preferable to concentrate on the individuals involved directly by means of case studies or similar research methods.

1.3 The coverage of the survey

The range of topics covered by this survey can be listed under five different headings which were used to divide up the questionnaire as follows:-

Part 1 General Attitudes to Drinking (Qs 1-8)
This section covers such things as attitudes towards drinking in general, light drinking and heavy drinking.

Part 2 Drinking Habits and Motivations (Qs 9-16)
This section covers questions relating to informants' drinking habits and, in particular, details of all that they drank in the week prior to their interview. It also includes informants' self assessment of the amount they drink and their perceived motivation for drinking.

Part 3 Drinking History (Qs 17-22)
The two main areas covered are parental drinking habits and the origin and development of informants' own drinking behaviour.

Part 4 Drinking and Health (Qs 23-27)
This section covers informants' opinions on the effect of drinking on health; these are compared with their opinions on the effect of smoking on health.

Part 5 Drunkenness and Alcoholism (Qs 28-32)
This covers informants' knowledge of, and attitudes towards, drunkenness and alcoholism.

The rest of the questionnaire (Qs 33-42) is devoted to classification data e.g. age, sex, occupation, income, household composition etc.

Preliminary studies took place in January and June 1972 and the final main stage interviewing was carried out during the period September to December 1972.

The actual order of the above sections and of the questions within them was determined by interviewing requirements. However, the final order in which the results are presented in this report reflects the most suitable order for analysis purposes. Thus the first part of the report, Chapters 2 - 6, is mainly concerned with the actual drinking habits of the general public and the origin and development of their drinking. The second part, Chapters 7 - 12, is devoted to examining the public's attitudes towards both their own drinking and general issues relating to drinking, drunkenness and alcoholism. The final part, Chapter 13, concentrates entirely on a special analysis of the characteristics of heavy drinkers.

1.4 The sample design

Since the purpose of the survey is to enquire into the drinking behaviour of adults in Scotland we required a representative sample of this group of people. To obtain such a sample it is necessary, first of all, to have a complete list of all adults resident in Scotland. The Electoral Registers in theory provide a complete list of the electorate aged 18[1] and over and thus were chosen as a suitable list from which the sample could be selected. A drawback with these Registers, however, is that they are known to exclude in error some of the electors who have recently been enfranchised i.e. 18 - 21 years olds. This group of young people were considered to be particularly important in terms of their drinking behaviour (since they are likely to be a target group for health educators) and so it was decided to try and rectify this deficiency. This was achieved by drawing a supplementary sample of this particular age group which will be described in detail later in this section.

A specific requirement of this survey was that we should have a fairly large number of people who drank alcohol in significant quantities so that we could analyse their drinking habits in detail. Since it is well known that drinking is more common amongst men than women and, moreover, that relatively heavy drinking is more frequently found amongst men than women, it was decided to weight the sample so that it included twice as many men as women.

Finally we wanted to ensure that the sample adequately represented all types of areas within Scotland. This was achieved by carrying out a 3 stage sample design as follows:-

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[1] *See Technical sampling report p. 307*

(i) The First Stage - the selection of local authorities

Simple random sampling of local authority areas could result by chance in some of the regions of Scotland being under- or over- represented although the sample as a whole would give a correct national picture. In order to achieve a sample accurately reflecting the distribution of all types of area it was necessary to stratify the sample by 2 factors, namely:-

(a) Population Density - we required representation within four categories i.e. conurbation[1], major cities (Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Dundee), other urban areas and lastly rural areas.

(b) Region - we required representation of each of the eight standard regions into which Scotland is divided for administrative purposes i.e. Highlands, North East, East, Central, South East, West, Border and South West.

This stratified design which still preserves randomness of final selection resulted in sixty-seven local authority areas being chosen.

(ii) The Second Stage - the selection of wards

In order to obtain a reasonably economic distribution of the sample for interviewing purposes, while preserving a high degree of representativeness, it was necessary to make a second stage selection of wards within each local authority area. In the majority of local authority areas 2 wards (or 2 parishes in rural areas) were selected but in very populous areas a larger number were selected in proportion to the size of their electorate. For example, Glasgow was represented by 28 wards and Edinburgh by 16 wards.

(iii) The Third Stage - the selection of individuals

The local authority areas and wards having been selected with probability proportionate to size, it remained at the third stage to select an equal number of electors randomly within each ward or parish so as to obtain the required representative national sample of adults aged 18 and over.

Since we required twice as many men as women the initial sample drawn from the Registers was deliberately large to allow for rejection of over half of the women. The final sample was achieved by randomly discarding 1.28 in 2.28 of the women originally selected (see Section 1.7), and resulted in a total of 3003 individuals, consisting of 2034 men and 969 women.

Having described the design of the main sample an explanation must now be given of the method used in selecting individuals for the supplementary sample. As already stated, it had been decided to draw a supplementary sample of young persons aged 18-21 *not* registered as electors so as to compensate for an anticipated deficiency in the Electoral Registers used in drawing the main sample. It was intended that those obtained from this supplementary sample should be added to those of the same age group in the main sample so that the correct proportion of young persons could be given. This method initially involved listing all the names of the electors on the Register at addresses where individuals had been selected for interview in the main sample. At the interviewing stage all selected individuals who were found to be Heads of Household[2] were asked for details of all the members of their household. Any young persons named at this point were checked against the interviewers lists of those on the Register and if their names were missing then they were interviewed. Since supplementary interviews only occurred where individuals in the main sample were Heads of Household we have the correct proportion of young people.

In fact, this supplementary sample resulted in the selection of an extra 48 young persons who had been omitted from the Registers. Thus, the total sample of individuals finally listed for interview (referred to as the "set sample") was as follows:-

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[1] *This comprises the Clydeside Conurbation which excludes Glasgow city.*

[2] *For definition of this term see 'A Handbook for Interviewers' by Jean Atkinson.*

Table 1.1

Set Sample: Numbers of men and women in the main and supplementary samples

	Men	Women	Total
Main sample	2034	969	3003
Supplementary sample	23	25	48
Total	2057	994	3051

The actual numbers of interviews obtained (referred to as the "achieved sample") were as follows:-

Table 1.2

Achieved Sample: Numbers of men and women in the main and supplementary samples

	Men	Women	Total
Main sample	1595	817	2412
Supplementary sample	18	23	41
Total	1613	840	2453

1.5 Non response

In any survey there is concern over the level of non response, i.e. those people who either refuse to take part in the survey or who cannot be contacted. However, we were particularly concerned about this survey because we thought that the subject matter might lead to a high refusal rate. At the one extreme those who had drinking problems might feel threatened by the survey while at the other those who had strong views against drinking might feel it was not a proper subject for a Government survey. Interviewers were therefore instructed to be particularly careful to introduce the survey in a very tactful manner and at the end of each interview an explanatory leaflet (see Appendix C) was given to all informants.

In fact, we were reasonably successful in gaining cooperation on this survey since the refusal rate was only 10% as can be seen from Table 1.3.

Because a fairly high refusal rate was expected interviewers were asked to note details of each refuser's age and sex and, where possible, the informant's reasons for deciding not to participate in the survey.

Besides this group of people who refused to take part in the survey there are also those whom we were not able to contact either because they had moved or because they were unavailable for interview for a variety of reasons. Although interviewers make every effort to find the new addresses of people who have moved so that they can still be interviewed, in many cases this is very difficult and in this particular survey we did not follow up those people who had moved to England. Consequently of the 10% whom we could not contact over half were not interviewed because they had moved. Another fifth of the people who constitute the non-contacts were those who had died since the Register was drawn up a year previously (i.e. since October 1971). A fuller analysis of those who could not be contacted and those who refused is given in the Technical sampling report.

Table 1.3

Set Sample:Achieved level of response

	Response rate	
	%	Number
Interviews	80	2453
Refusals	10	301
Non-contacts	10	295
Ineligibles	-	2
Total	100	3051

1.6 A comparison of the age and sex distribution of the achieved sample with 1971 Census

To check whether non response has had a biassing affect on the age and sex distribution of our sample we have presented comparative figures for the achieved sample and the 1971 Census[1] respectively in Table 1.4. In the two columns we have given the proportion of individuals in each age group out of the total number of individuals aged 17½[2] and over.

The comparative figures for each age and sex group show that there is no appreciable difference between the sample and the Census. Thus we can conclude that we have a representative sample in terms of the age and sex distribution of the general population aged 17½ and over in Scotland.

1.7 A note on the implications of using a weighted sample

As we stated earlier the sample design for this survey involved using a weighting factor for the main sample: that is, selecting electors so that we obtained a sample consisting of twice as many men as women. Consequently, if we wish to produce results representative of the general population we must reweight our figures so that we have the correct proportions of men and women.

In practice reweighting involves multiplying individual data at the analysis stage by the inverse of the factor used in making the selection. Since the actual ratio of male to female electors in the population is estimated to be 1: 1.14 and since we required a sample where the ratio was 2:1 we initially selected an inflated sample where the ratio was 2: 2.28 (the same as in the population). In order to obtain the desired ratio we finally selected only 1 in 2.28 of the female electors. Thus, when analysing this data it is necessary to weight up all females by a factor of 2.28 in order to obtain the correct proportions of men and women in the general population.

However, there is the extra problem of combining the results of the main sample and the supplementary sample. The latter sample is affected because young persons were only selected in those households where the informant (from the main sample) was the Head of Household. Since there was a smaller proportion of females in the main sample than in the general population we subsequently obtained a smaller proportion of female Heads of Household. In order to add together the results of the main and the supplementary

[1] *Figures obtained from Census 1971 Scotland, Population Tables, Table 12 pp 56-57*

[2] *The youngest age group starts at 17½ as this is the age when young persons become eligible for inclusion on the Register - for further details see Technical sampling report p. 307*

samples, we must weight up by 2.28 all those young persons (whether male or female) in the supplementary sample who have female Heads of Household.

Table 1.4

The age and sex distribution of the achieved sample compared with the 1971 Census for Scotland

	Men		Women		Total	
Age Group	Achieved Sample	Census	Achieved Sample	Census	Achieved Sample	Census
	%	%	%	%	%	%
17½-21	9.6	10.0	9.0	8.6	9.3	9.3
22-30	17.4	17.9	17.2	15.7	17.2	16.7
31-40	17.9	17.3	17.1	15.8	17.4	16.5
41-50	19.1	18.1	15.1	16.9	16.9	17.4
51-65	24.3	23.7	24.5	24.2	24.3	24.0
66 and over	11.8	12.9	17.1	18.9	14.6	16.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Base[†]	*1618.1*	*1,715,985*	*1886.9*	*1,955,605*	*3505.0*	*3,671,590*

[†] *The bases are weighted for the sample since we required estimates of population figures - see Section 1.7.*

In fact, throughout the report we have required figures for the general population and so all the tables have been presented using reweighted data. In other words both females in the main sample and those young people in the supplementary sample who have a female Head of Household have been weighted up by a factor of 2.28 so that the results represent the numbers in the population and do not directly reflect the numbers actually interviewed. Since the weighting factor is not an integer number all our figures have been given to one decimal place.

A note should also be added here about the application of significance tests to results based upon weighted data. Exact significance testing would involve the calculation of sampling errors separately for each differentially weighted sub-group within the sample i.e. males and females in the main sample and young persons having male and female Heads of Household respectively in the supplementary sample. This being a laborious, inconvenient and expensive procedure, results of significance tests are not given in the report. However, it is possible to establish general trends within the data using approximate calculations which clearly distinguish those findings which are significant from those which are at all doubtful. Thus, our policy throughout this report has been to base conclusions only on general and consistent patterns in the data which are significant in the sense so described.

Part I

Drinking habits

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2 The prevalence of alcoholic drinking in Scotland

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the prevalence of drinking amongst different social and economic groups in Scotland today. We felt that this was a necessary precursor to an examination of drinking habits as such, since it seemed important first of all to look at drinking in the context of the population as a whole. Therefore we have taken a number of social and demographic factors such as sex, age, social class, area of residence, religious affiliation and friends' drinking behaviour and noted to what extent they each appear to determine drinking behaviour.

2.2 The measure of drinking behaviour

We required a measure of drinking that included at the one extreme the abstainers and at the other the heavy drinkers, while at the same time fulfilling the criterion of being simple and concise. We finally adopted a measure which reflected what seemed to be fairly 'natural' distinctions between, firstly, those who do not drink at all, secondly, those who drink occasionally and for whom drinking is only a very minor part of their lives, and thirdly, those who drink regularly and for whom drinking plays a fairly noticeable part in their lives. Thus the three groups are:-

(i) Non-drinkers	These comprise those people who stated that they never drink nowadays[1]. This is a deliberately strict definition of non-drinking; all those who said that they drank for medicinal purposes or just at times like the New Year have been excluded.
(ii) Occasional drinkers	This covers a wide range of people who do drink but who said they did not drink in the week prior to the day of their interview. Although this includes a few people (8.8% of all occasional drinkers) who said they usually drink at least once a week, the vast majority usually drank less than once a week.
(iii) Regular drinkers	This group comprises those people who had had at least one drink in the week prior to the day of their interview. Since the majority stated that this was typical of the amount they usually drank in a week, we felt that this indicated a fairly regular habit. Naturally, this is a very broad group which includes both those who consume just one drink a week and those who consume a considerable amount of alcohol every day, but it was thought to be appropriate for the comparative purposes for which it is used in this chapter. (In later chapters the measure has been refined to take account of finer differences in drinking consumption.)

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[1] *See Appendix B, Q.9(a) p. 292*

A question may be raised as to whether a measure based on 'last week's' drinking gives a reliable picture of each individual's usual drinking habits. There were, in fact, strong practical reasons for collecting data based on 'last week'. Firstly, it is much easier for an individual to recall what he actually had to drink 'last week' than in a usual week. Secondly, it can be argued that when asked about usual habits it is easier for him to understimate his drinking behaviour; this is rather less likely when a person is actually describing events that occurred 'last week'. Thirdly, we required a considerabl amount of detail on drinking behaviour; the actual beverages drunk, the times of day when drinking took place, the places where alcohol was consumed, the company with whom the drinking was done etc. and it was very convenient to obtain this information by simply relating it to drinking occasions that occurred 'last week'. Indeed, it would have been impossible to have obtained this degree of detail for 'usual' drinking behaviour without asking a large number of very repetitive and rather hypothetical questions devoted to these different aspects of drinking.

However, there is still the theoretical problem as to whether 'last week' is a reliable indicator of usual drinking frequency and we therefore asked our informants if they considered that 'last week' was typical of their usual drinking behaviour (Qs 11 and 12, see Appendix B). Table 2.1 shows that the great majority of informants thought that 'last week's' drinking gave a fair indication of how often they usually drank. The exceptions to this (marked † in Table 2.1) were firstly, the 2.9% of informants who said that they usually drank about once a week, though classed as 'occasional drinkers' because they happened not to have drunk 'last week', and secondly, the 6.4% of informants who said that they usually drank less than once a week but were classed as 'regular drinkers' because they did drink 'last week'. Although it might seem reasonable to switc these categories so that occasional drinkers consist entirely of those who usually drink less than once a week, while regular drinkers comprise only those who usually drink at least once a week, an analysis of these groups given in Appendix A, pp 283 shows that this is not justified and, indeed, that 'last week's' drinking is a more valid estimate than a usual week's drinking. Consequently our division between regular and occasional drinkers rests upon whether anything alcoholic was drunk in the week prior to the day of interview.

Table 2.1

The simplified classification of drinking behaviour compared with a more detailed classification of drinking frequency

Usual drinking frequency	Whether or not drank last week	% of total population		Classified as:
Never drinks nowadays		8.9		Non-drinkers
Usually drinks once a year or less	and did not drink last week	9.5	32.5	Occasional drinkers
Usually drinks once every 2-6 months		10.9		
Usually drinks between once a fortnight and once a month		8.1		
Usually drinks about once a week†		2.9		
Can't say often drinks		1.1		
Usually drinks less than once a week†	and did drink last week	6.4	58.6	Regular drinkers
Usually drinks at least once a week		52.2		

2.3 Prevalence of drinking by age at the time of interview

It is generally believed that drinking is more a male than a female habit and, although in recent years it has become more socially acceptable for women to drink, we would still expect to find, firstly, that more men than women do drink, and, secondly (and perhaps more importantly), that amongst drinkers men tend to drink more frequently and consume larger quantities of alcohol than do women.

Using our drinking measure we would therefore expect, firstly, a greater proportion of women than of men to be non-drinkers and, secondly, a greater proportion of men than women to be regular drinkers.

Turning to Table 2.2 which gives the distribution of drinking behaviour by sex and age at the time of interview, we can see in the bottom row the total figures for all men and all women. It is immediately obvious that there is a huge difference in drinking behaviour between the sexes: nearly three-quarters of all men compared to just under a half of all women are regular drinkers. At the other extreme there are over twice as many non-drinkers amongst women as amongst men. The diagram below (Fig. 2a) highlights the different drinking habits of men and women.

Fig 2(a) Distribution of drinking behaviour for men and women

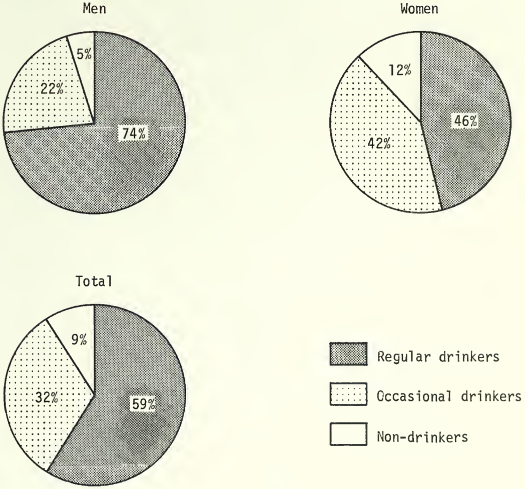

Table 2.2 The distribution of drinking behaviour by sex and age at the time of interview

Age at time of interview		Men					Women				
		Non-drinkers	Occa-sional drinkers	Regular drinkers	Total	*Base*	Non-drinkers	Occa-sional drinkers	Regular drinkers	Total	*Base*
17-21	%	2	10	88	100	*155.1*	10	26	64	100	*170.2*
22-30	%	1	14	86	100	*281.0*	6	36	58	100	*323.8*
31-40	%	3	15	82	100	*289.0*	3	41	56	100	*321.5*
41-50	%	2	19	78	100	*309.0*	6	45	49	100	*285.0*
51-65	%	6	29	64	100	*393.0*	15	47	38	100	*460.5*
66 and over	%	17	40	43	100	*191.0*	31	47	22	100	*321.5*
Not answered		-	-	-	-	-	-	*2.3*	*2.3*	*	*4.6*
Total	%	5	22	74	100	*1618.1*	12	42	46	100	*1886.9*

* *Base is too small for percentaging - actual figures given in italics*

However, these overall figures for the two sexes are rather an over-simplification for they do not take into consideration the factor of age which might be expected to have a major and quite separate effect on drinking behaviour. Looking at the columns of figures for regular drinkers given in Table 2.2 we can see that younger people are indeed more likely to be regular drinkers than are older people. There is a quite striking trend, for both men and women, showing a consistend decline in the proportion of regular drinkers as age increases. The proportion of regular drinkers is reduced by a half for men and to a third for women between the youngest and oldest age groups.

At the same time, for any given age group there is a higher proportion of regular drinkers amongst men than amongst women and the difference is fairly consistent (between 20% and 30%), which shows that there is no differential sex effect for any age group. However, the point made earlier about the risk of over-simplifying by looking at the overall sex totals is borne out by the fact that there is a greater proportion of regular drinkers amongst the women aged under 50 than amongst the men aged over 65.

If we now concentrate on the non-drinkers it is clear that for men there is a steady increase in the proportion of non-drinkers as age increases although it is not until the age group 65 and over that there is anything like a significant proportion of non-drinkers. Indeed, it is worth emphasizing that there is only a very tiny proportion of non-drinkers amongst men - 5% overall. However, with women there are 12% non-drinkers overall and the relationship between age and not drinking differs somewhat from that which has been noted for men. While, as we would expect, there is a definite increase in non-drinking as age increases for those aged 31 or over, below this age group there is an increase in non-drinking as age decreases. Thus 10% of these women aged under 21 were non-drinkers but only 3% of those in their thirties were non-drinkers; the most probable reason for this is that some women do not start drinking until they are well into their twenties or thirties. (The great majority of men, however, had started drinking by age 17.)

2.4 Prevalence of drinking behaviour by age and marital status

A person's marital status is often thought to have a bearing on his or her drinking behaviour, i.e. regular drinking is usually considered to be the norm amongst young single men while non-drinking, or at least very occasional drinking, is usually expected of elderly single (or widowed) women. Since we already know from the previous section that age is strongly associated with drinking behaviour we decided to compare the drinking habits of those who are single, those who are married and those who are widowed, separated or divorced, within 3 broad age groups (i.e. those aged 17-30, 31-50 and 51 and over). Thus, Table 2.3 shows the distribution of drinking behaviour for each age and marital status group for men and women separately.

If we first of all look at the table for men we can see from the overall figures for each of the three marital status categories that single men are the most likely to be regular drinkers. On the other hand those who are widowed, separated or divorced are the most likely to be non-drinkers.

However, if we examine the different age groups we do not find that regular drinking is always most prevalent amongst single men. The exception is in the middle age group where we find that married men are most likely to be regular drinkers.

Those men who are widowed, separated or divorced are insufficient in number to be considered amongst the 17-30 and 31-50 age groups but in the oldest age group (where their numbers are large enough for analysis) it is interesting to note that they have a greater proportion of regular drinkers than the married men. At the same time, though, this group of men who are widowed, separated or divorced have the highest proportion of non-drinkers.

Turning now to the table for women we find that, overall, single women, like single men, are the most likely to be regular drinkers. If we look within the three age groups we find that again there is an exception to this general trend although in this case it is amongst the oldest group of women where the married have a greater proportion of regular drinkers than the single. One explanation for this may be that married women are free of family commitments by this age (i.e. 51 and over) and moreover, as they have husbands they may be more likely to participate in social gatherings where drinking takes place than their single or widowed contemporaries. The latter may also have strong views about

Table 2.3 The distribution of drinking behaviour by sex, age and marital status

Age and marital status		Men: Non-drinkers	Men: Occasional drinkers	Men: Regular drinkers	Men: Total	Men: *Base*	Women: Non-drinkers	Women: Occasional drinkers	Women: Regular drinkers	Women: Total	Women: *Base*
17-30											
single	%	1	9	90	100	*233.1*	12	23	65	100	*185.3*
married	%	1	16	84	100	*197.0*	5	38	57	100	*295.0*
widowed/separated/ divorced		-	*1.0*	*4.0*	*	*5.0*	-	*4.6*	*9.1*	*	*13.7*
31-50											
single	%	2	27	71	100	*48.0*	8	22	70	100	*61.6*
married	%	2	16	81	100	*536.0*	5	46	50	100	*497.0*
widowed/separated/ divorced	%	*2.0*	*3.0*	*9.0*	*	*14.0*	-	48	52	100	*47.9*
51+											
single	%	10	19	71	100	*42.0*	23	54	23	100	*98.0*
married	%	9	36	55	100	*46.9*	14	46	40	100	*410.4*
widowed/separated/ divorced	%	15	19	65	100	*73.0*	32	47	21	100	*273.6*
All ages											
single	%	2	13	84	100	*323.1*	14	32	54	100	*344.9*
married	%	5	24	71	100	*1202.0*	8	44	48	100	*1202.4*
widowed/separated/ divorced	%	14	20	66	100	*92.0*	26	46	27	100	*335.2*
Not answered		-	-	*1.0*	*	*1.0*	-	*2.3*	*2.3*	*	*4.6*
Total	%	5	22	74	100	*1618.1*	12	42	46	100	*1886.9*

* *Base is too small for percentaging - actual figures given in italics*

the propriety of women drinking on their own. An interpretation along these lines would also account for the high proportion of non-drinkers amongst single and widowed women aged 51 and over.

2.5 Prevalence of drinking behaviour by social class of the Head of Household

Another demographic factor which is considered to be an important influence on people's attitudes and behaviour is that of social class. This concept is usually measured by reference to the occupation of the Head of Household[1], who is in most cases male, since the type of occupation he follows is thought to be a good indicator of a family's life style and general social behaviour. At its simplest, there is the manual/non-manual job distinction which is mainly used to distinguish the working class from the middle class. We have adopted the Registrar General's fivefold classification of social class but have slightly adapted it so that there is a clear distinction between the manual and non-manual groups. Thus our first two classes, Professional (1) and Intermediate (2), which are both non-manual classes, are identical with the Registrar General's classes I and II but his third class (skilled occupations) has been split by us into non-manual (our class 3) and manual (our class 4). Finally we have amalgamated into one class (our class 5) the Registrar General's last two manual classes i.e. Semi-skilled occupations (class IV) and Unskilled occupations (class V).

Table 2.4 compares the five social classes in terms of their drinking behaviour for men and women respectively. Looking first of all at the table for men we can see that the proportion of regular drinkers is highest for the Professional class while there is little variation between the other classes in their proportion of regular drinkers[2]. At the same time the Professional class also has the highest proportion of non-drinkers. At first sight this appears contradictory but it actually reflects a greater polarity of drinking behaviour in this class than in any of the other classes.

Turning to the table showing the relationship between social class and drinking behaviour for women, we can see a much stronger relationship. The proportion of regular drinkers steadily declines from the Professional down to the Semi- and unskilled manual class. However, the fact should not be overlooked that amongst women the Professional class is again outstandingly high and, indeed, it has approximately the same proportion of regular drinkers as for men as a whole. In contrast to the men, the proportion of female non-drinkers is exceptionally low for the Professional class, thus showing no evidence of polarity in drinking behaviour. The other social classes show little variation in their proportions of non-drinkers (approximately 9% - 10%) except for class 5, the Semi- and unskilled group, where the proportion of non-drinkers is 15%.

It is worth noting from the table for women that in households where the Head is a housewife there is the lowest proportion of regular drinkers and conversely the highest proportion of non-drinkers. This group of women, though, is likely to comprise mainly elderly widows and so this result is not very surprising.

In concluding this section it is evident that, overall, social class is not associated with drinking behaviour for men, with the exception of the Professional class where there is a higher than average proportion of both regular drinkers and non-drinkers. With women, however, there is a clear trend indicating that regular drinking increases as we move up the social scale.

2.6 Prevalence of drinking behaviour by age and social class

We have already ascertained from Section 2.3 that for any given age group men are more likely than women to be regular drinkers and that, in general, as age increases the

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[1] *For definition of term 'Head of Household' see 'A Handbook for Interviewers' - Jean Atkinson.*

[2] *The proportion of regular drinkers is in fact highest for those whose Head of Household is a housewife but not too much importance should be attached to this group as the base is very small.*

Table 2.4 The distribution of regular drinkers by sex and social class of the Head of Household

Social class of Head of Household			Men					Women				
			Non-drinkers	Occa-sional drinkers	Regular drinkers	Total	*Base*	Non-drinkers	Occa-sional drinkers	Regular drinkers	Total	*Base*
Professional	1	%	8	16	76	100	*75.0*	2	23	74	100	*96.5*
Intermediate	2	%	4	23	73	100	*270.0*	9	33	58	100	*285.7*
Other non-manual	3	%	6	21	72	100	*182.0*	10	42	48	100	*271.3*
Skilled manual	4	%	5	22	73	100	*648.0*	9	46	45	100	*619.0*
Semi- and unskilled manual	5	%	4	23	73	100	*375.3*	15	47	38	100	*318.4*
Housewife		%	2	15	83	100	*40.8*	27	44	28	100	*241.7*
Don't know/ Inadequately described		%	-	*4.0*	*23.0*	*	*27.0*	20	40	40	100	*54.4*
Total		%	5	22	74	100	*1618.1*	12	42	46	100	*1886.9*

* *Base is too small for percentaging - actual figures given in italics*

proportion of regular drinkers declines. At the same time we have found out from Section 2.5 that for men social class is not associated with drinking behaviour except for the Professional class, where regular drinkers predominate, while for women there is a general trend showing a positive association between regular drinking and position on the social scale (which runs from Semi- and unskilled manual up to Professional).

We decided, therefore, that it would be useful to look at these two variables of age and social class together to see whether their effects were independent. For the sake of simplicity we decided to concentrate on the proportion of regular drinkers as an index of these effects. Thus we were aiming to see, firstly, if the relationship between age and regular drinking was maintained over all the five social classes and, secondly, if the relationship between social class and regular drinking was maintained over the five age groups. Table 2.5 gives the proportion of regular drinkers within each age and social class category for men and women respectively. Some of the bases are fairly small, particularly for the Professional class, so we have to be more cautious about drawing conclusions from them as the sampling error is liable to be high.

If we first look at the figures for men in Table 2.4 it can be seen that increasing age is associated with a decrease in the proportion of regular drinkers whatever the social class. For all social classes there is a slight drop in the proportion of regular drinkers amongst men aged 31-50 and a larger drop amongst those over 50 years of age. On the other hand, social class seems to have little influence on regular drinking amongst men within each of the age groups. The only exception is the semi- and unskilled manual class in the 17-30 age group which has a higher than average proportion of regular drinkers - 93%.

Turning to the results for women a similar but less consistent relationship is found showing increasing age to be associated with a decrease in the proportion of regular drinkers whatever the social class. However, we also find that, in general, women who are higher up the social class scale are more likely to be regular drinkers in all three age groups. As we would expect, therefore, the highest proportion of regular drinkers is found amongst women aged 17-30 in the Professional class - 89%.

It can be concluded that the effects of age and social class on regular drinking are independent. Thus, whatever informants' social class, the older they are the less likely they are to be regular drinkers. Amongst women, the higher their position on the social class scale, whatever their age, the more likely they are to be regular drinkers but in general social class makes no difference to the prevalence of regular drinking amongst men. These results are highlighted in Fig 2(b).

2.7 Prevalence of drinking behaviour by income of the Head of Household

In considering income it seemed best to take the income of the Head of Household rather than of the particular individual chosen for interview (for the majority of men, of course, this is the same person) as the former probably provides the best measure of family income, short of asking for details of income from all members of the household. Within the general population income and social class are fairly highly correlated but Table 2.6 shows that drinking behaviour is more strongly associated with income than with social class. For both men and women there is a general trend which shows that the proportion of regular drinkers increases as income rises. In the case of women there is a particularly striking contrast between those whose Head of Household had an income of over £40 per week (70% are regular drinkers) and those whose Head of Household had an income of £10 per week or under (27% are regular drinkers).

However, there seems to be a rather curious increase in the proportion of regular drinkers amongst men who earn up to £10 per week which goes against the general trend for a lower income to be associated with a lower proportion of regular drinkers. It is hard to ascertain the reason for this but it is probably a safe assumption that most of this very low income group are pensioners.

Turning to the non-drinkers, in each income bracket the pattern is again different from that found in the case of social class. There appears to be a similar pattern for men and women in that as the income of the Head of Household drops the proportion of non-drinkers increases.

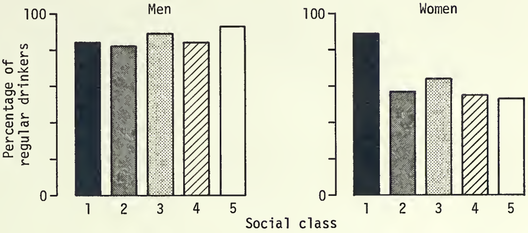
Table 2.5 The distribution of regular drinkers by sex, age and social class of the Head of Household

Social class of Head of Household		Men								Women							
		17 - 30 years		31 - 50		51 years and over		All age groups		17 - 30 years		31 - 50		51 years and over		All age groups	
		%	*Base*	%	*Base*	%	*Base*	%	*Base*	%	*Base*	%	*Base*	%	*Base*	%	*Base*
Professional	1	84	*19.0*	82	*34.0*	59	*22.0**	76	*75.0*	89	*39.5*	62	*29.6**	67	*27.4**	74	*96.5*
Intermediate	2	82	*77.0*	77	*101.0*	60	*92.0*	73	*270.0*	57	*73.7*	70	*114.0*	46	*98.0*	58	*285.7*
Other non-manual	3	89	*37.0*	75	*173.0*	61	*72.0*	72	*182.0*	64	*63.8*	53	*86.6*	36	*120.8*	48	*271.3*
Skilled manual	4	84	*164.0*	83	*251.0*	52	*233.0*	73	*648.0*	55	*199.5*	49	*232.6*	31	*184.7*	45	*616.7*
Semi- and unskilled manual	5	93	*101.3*	80	*122.0*	55	*152.0*	73	*375.3*	53	*74.4*	44	*104.9*	26	*139.1*	38	*318.4*
All social classes (inc. Not answered/ Don't know)		87	*436.1*	80	*598.0*	57	*584.0*	74	*1618.1*	60	*493.9*	53	*606.4*	31	*782.0*	46	*1886.9*

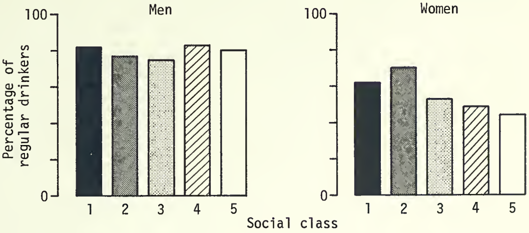
* *Base small: percentage liable to high sampling error.*

Fig 2(b) Distribution of regular drinkers by sex, age and social class

Age 17-30



Age 31-50



Age 51 and over

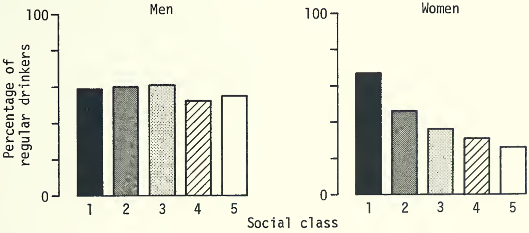


Table 2.6 The distribution of drinking behaviour by sex and income of the Head of Household

Net income per week of Head of Household		Men					Women				
		Non-drinkers	Occa-sional drinkers	Regular drinkers	Total	*Base*	Non-drinkers	Occa-sional drinkers	Regular drinkers	Total	*Base*
Over £40	%	2	13	85	100	*212.0*	6	24	70	100	*155.8*
Over £30 to £40	%	2	17	81	100	*239.0*	6	35	59	100	*195.8*
Over £25 to £30	%	2	21	77	100	*282.0*	7	41	52	100	*282.2*
Over £20 to £25	%	3	26	71	100	*296.0*	8	50	42	100	*273.3*
Over £15 to £20	%	7	24	70	100	*204.0*	7	47	45	100	*218.0*
Over £10 to £15	%	11	35	53	100	*149.6*	18	37	45	100	*208.2*
Up to £10	%	12	23	64	100	*145.6*	26	48	26	100	*361.2*
Don't know	%	3	14	82	100	*62.0*	10	41	50	100	*128.7*
Refusal	%	-	*2.0*	*22.0*	*	*24.0*	29	39	33	100	*55.7*
Not answered		-	-	*4.0*	*	*4.0*	-	*4.6*	*4.6*	*	*9.1*
Total	%	5	22	74	100	*1618.1*	12	42	46	100	*1886.9*

* *Base is too small for percentaging - actual figures given in italics*

2.8 Prevalence of drinking behaviour by area of residence

As a result of the reorganisation of administrative areas for local government purposes from April 1974, Scotland is divided into eight new standard regions, namely the Highlands, North East, East, Central, South East, West, Border and South West. However, as they stand these regions are not very suitable for comparative analysis purposes, since the Highlands and Border areas are very sparsely populated whereas the West contains the heavily populated area of Glasgow and the Clydeside Conurbation, and the East contains Edinburgh. Thus in comparing, say, the Highlands, and the West we are not only looking at specific geographical differences but also at population density differences - in other words, we are contrasting a crofting area with a heavily industrialised city area.

To overcome this problem we have devised a measure of area of residence which separates the inhabitants of the four major cities (Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Dundee) and the Clydeside Conurbation from the rest of the population in their region. The remainder has then been divided into other urban (i.e. small town) areas and truly rural areas and has been combined with the other four regions that entirely comprise other urban and rural areas, namely, Highlands, Central, Border and the South West. Thus our sixfold classification, which really reflects a combination of population density and geographical region, is as follows: Clydeside Conurbation, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Dundee (combined, as the sample numbers are too small for separate analysis), other urban areas, and lastly rural areas.

Turning to Table 2.7 we can see that for men the highest proportions of regular drinkers are to be found in Edinburgh and the Clydeside Conurbation, while the lowest proportions are in the rural areas and Aberdeen and Dundee. Much the same picture is true for women, although Glasgow also appears to have a high proportion of regular drinkers.

If we now examine the non-drinkers it is evident that amongst men the highest proportion is also found in Edinburgh. Thus, men living in Edinburgh seem to behave in the same way as those who belong to the Professional social class, since they both point to a polarity of drinking behaviour. With women there is no such polarity, and indeed the proportion of non-drinkers is lowest in Edinburgh. However, the Clydeside Conurbation has a strikingly high proportion of female non-drinkers (18%).

To sum up, it seems that there is not a direct relationship between population density and the prevalence of regular drinking. Although Glasgow, Edinburgh and the Clydeside Conurbation which have the highest population densities, have the highest proportions of regular drinkers, the urban areas seem to follow them instead of the two other cities, Aberdeen and Dundee, as would be predicted from a direct relationship. Indeed Aberdeen and Dundee have a lower proportion of female regular drinkers than do the very sparsely populated rural areas. Similarly the tendency for non-drinking to go with lower population densities is not consistent - Edinburgh has the highest proportion of male non-drinkers and the Clydeside Conurbation has an exceptionally high proportion of female non-drinkers.

2.9 Prevalence of drinking behaviour by country of origin

The overwhelming majority of our sample (90%) were born in Scotland, the only two reasonably large groups born elsewhere being those whose birthplace was England (5%) or Ireland (i.e. Northern Ireland and Eire) (2%). There are various theories about the Irish being heavier drinkers and the English being more moderate drinkers than the Scottish. However, there are twice as many women as men in the group born in Ireland which leaves a very small figure for men on which no reliable inference can be based.

In fact, the results shown in Table 2.8 reveal virtually no differences in drinking behaviour between those born in England and those born in Scotland. It appears that there are slightly more non-drinkers amongst those born in England than amongst those born in Scotland but this difference should be treated with caution owing to the small number of informants born in England. Since people from other countries constitute such a small part of the population (2%) their effect upon the overall drinking picture is negligible. (This is not to say that it would be expected that Indians, Eastern Europeans, Africans, etc. would have the same drinking habits as the Scottish population but merely that their numbers are so small in Scotland that they can be disregarded when considering national figures.)

Table 2.7 The distribution of drinking behaviour by sex and area of residence

Area of residence		Men Non-drinkers	Occa-sional drinkers	Regular drinkers	Total	*Base*	Women Non-drinkers	Occa-sional drinkers	Regular drinkers	Total	*Base*
Clydeside Conurbation	%	4	17	80	100	*279.3*	18	33	50	100	*252.5*
Glasgow	%	5	19	76	100	*245.0*	10	38	52	100	*319.7*
Edinburgh	%	7	11	82	100	*140.3*	9	39	52	100	*175.0*
Aberdeen and Dundee	%	6	24	70	100	*124.0*	13	50	36	100	*158.0*
Other Urban	%	4	20	76	100	*426.0*	11	42	47	100	*510.1*
Rural	%	5	31	64	100	*403.0*	14	48	39	100	*471.6*
Total	%	5	22	74	100	*1618.1*	12	42	46	100	*1886.9*

Table 2.8 The distribution of drinking behaviour by sex and country of origin

Country of origin		Men					Women				
		Non drinkers	Occa-sional drinkers	Regular drinkers	Total	*Base*	Non drinkers	Occa-sional drinkers	Regular drinkers	Total	*Base*
Scotland	%	4	22	74	100	*1472.8*	12	42	45	100	*1700.3*
England	%	8	16	76	100	*89.0*	19	36	45	100	*95.4*
Ireland	%	*2.0*	*7.0*	*13.3*	*	*22.3*	20	35	45	100	*45.6*
Other countries	%	-	*7.0*	*20.0*	*	*27.0*	6	35	60	100	*38.8*
Not answered		*1.0*	*5.0*	*1.0*	*	*7.0*	-	*4.6*	*2.3*	*	*6.9*
Total	%	5	22	74	100	*1618.1*	12	42	46	100	*1886.9*

* *Base is too small for percentaging - actual figures given in italics*

2.10 Prevalence of drinking behaviour by religious affiliation and frequency of church attendance

We felt that it was important to include both of the above measures when discussing the association between religion and drinking behaviour. The former (religious affiliation) is simply a measure representing people's outward religious commitment while the latter (frequency of church attendance) is an attempt to measure people's degree of involvement in religion.

(i) Religious affiliation

The main religious denomination in Scotland is, of course, the Church of Scotland to which 42% of the population say they belong. The only other sizeable religious group is the Roman Catholic Church, constituting 13%; the other Protestant denominations (i.e. Baptist, Methodist, Church of England, etc) comprise 7% of the population, leaving only 3% belonging to minority groups such as Christian sects or to non-Christian religions. 34% claimed that they had no religious affiliation whatsoever. Table 2.9 compares the distribution of drinking behaviour within the different religious groups, including those who had no religious affiliation, for men and women respectively. It might be expected that those with no religious affiliation would have the highest proportion of regular drinkers since most religious tenets, if not wholly against drinking, tend towards disapproval of drinking. In the case of men, however, the proportion of regular drinkers is higher among the Roman Catholics than among those who have no religious affiliation. As we would expect, though, the Christian sects and non-Christian religions which tend to have stricter codes of social behaviour have the lowest proportion of regular drinkers and the highest proportion of non-drinkers.

On the other hand, the proportion of female regular drinkers is much the same for the Roman Catholic, Church of Scotland and no religious affiliation groups although, as with the men, it is lowest for the sects and non-Christian religions. It is interesting that the proportion of female non-drinkers is outstandingly low for the Roman Catholics (about half the average for all women) so that it seems that being Roman Catholic is associated with occasional rather than regular drinking.

(ii) Frequency of church attendance

Although we thought it was important to see if there was any association between membership of a religious group and drinking habits, we were aware of the limitations of this in that many people pay lip-service to a specific religion without ever attending church or in any way taking part in religious affairs. We considered that actual church attendance, though by no means a perfect measure, would be the best way of estimating a person's degree of religious involvement. Table 2.10 compares the distribution of drinking behaviour by sex for various degrees of frequency of church attendance ranging from more than once a week to never attending church. When looking at these tables it should be borne in mind that a much greater proportion of men than women (43% compared to 27%) claim no religious affiliation (and thus are not asked how often they attend church).

Looking first of all at the table for men, there appears to be a straightforward relationship which shows that regular drinking decreases as church attendance becomes more frequent. However, for non-drinkers there is not the expected increase as church attendance becomes more frequent, for the proportions show very little variation except for a sharp increase at the extreme end of very frequent church attendance (23% of those who attend church more than once a week are non-drinkers).

Turning to women, a similar pattern of church attendance emerges for the non-drinkers, with those who attend church more than once a week having the highest proportion of non-drinkers, but for the regular drinkers there is a totally different pattern. Although frequent church attendance (once a week or more often) is associated with a low proportion of regular drinkers, it seems that infrequent church attendance (once a month or less) is more strongly related to regular drinking than no church attendance or no religious affiliation at all. Indeed, the proportion of female regular drinkers amongst those who never attend church is exceptionally low at 40%, although the reason for this is not apparent.

Table 2.9 The distribution of drinking behaviour by sex and religious affiliation

Religious affiliation	Men					Women				
	Non drinkers	Occa-sional drinkers	Regular drinkers	Total	*Base*	Non-drinkers	Occa-sional drinkers	Regular drinkers	Total	*Base*
No religious affiliation %	4	19	77	100	*695.1*	12	41	47	100	*508.3*
Church of Scotland %	5	27	68	100	*568.0*	11	43	46	100	*909.8*
Roman Catholic %	4	16	80	100	*221.0*	7	46	47	100	*243.4*
Other Protestant denominations %	8	20	72	100	*89.0*	16	40	44	100	*152.5*
Sects and non-Christian religions %	15	32	52	100	*40.0*	47	27	27	100	*68.4*
Not answered	-	-	*5.0*	*	*5.0*	-	*2.3*	*2.3*	*	*4.6*
Total %	5	22	74	100	*1618.1*	12	42	46	100	*1886.9*

* *Base is too small for percentaging - actual figures are given in italics.*

Table 2.10 The distribution of drinking behaviour by sex and church attendance

Frequency of church attendance		Men					Women				
		Non-drinkers	Occa-sional drinkers	Regular drinkers	Total	*Base*	Non-drinkers	Occa-sional drinkers	Regular drinkers	Total	*Base*
No religious affiliation	%	4	19	77	100	*695.1*	12	40	47	100	*508.3*
Attends church:											
More than once a week	%	23	24	53	100	*66.0*	28	43	29	100	*132.0*
About once a week	%	7	24	68	100	*217.0*	12	50	37	100	*404.3*
At least once a month	%	4	28	67	100	*113.0*	11	36	52	100	*240.4*
Less than once a month	%	2	24	74	100	*344.0*	7	37	56	100	*414.1*
Never attends church	%	4	19	77	100	*181.0*	16	44	40	100	*185.7*
Not answered		-	-	*2.0*	*	*2.0*	*2.3*	-	-	*	*2.3*
Total	%	5	22	74	100	*1618.1*	12	42	46	100	*1886.9*

* *Base is too small for percentaging - actual figures given in italics*

2.11 Prevalence of drinking behaviour by smoking habits

There have been many studies[1] on smoking habits which have shown that smoking is associated with drinking and Table 2.11 shows that this survey is no exception. If we compare the penultimate row of figures, which gives the distribution of drinking behaviour amongst all smokers, with that given in the top row for non-smokers it is apparent that there is a higher proportion of regular drinkers amongst the smokers for both men and women. However, the difference in the proportion of regular drinkers between the smokers and non-smokers (given by subtracting the top row from the penultimate row) is considerably higher for women than for men (14% compared with 7%).

It can be seen that amongst men there is a trend showing that regular drinking increases with the number of cigarettes smoked, with the exception of those people who smoke 5-9 cigarettes a day, where the proportion of regular drinkers is very low. With women also there is a peculiarly low proportion of regular drinkers for this category of smokers but overall there does not appear to be any general trend for regular drinking to increase with amount smoked. It can be seen, though, that those women who smoke more than 25 cigarettes a day are the most likely to be regular drinkers.

Thus it can be concluded that smoking as such rather than not smoking is associated with regular drinking, while heavy smokers (those who smoke 25 cigarettes or more a day) include the highest proportions of regular drinkers.

2.12 Prevalence of drinking behaviour by perceived drinking behaviour of friends

Both common observation and general findings in social psychology support the view that individuals tend to adopt those forms of social behaviour which they see as typical of their friends' (or associates') behaviour. Studies of smoking behaviour, for example, have shown that regular smokers differ most markedly from non-smokers in terms of the proportion of their friends who smoke; a far higher proportion of regular smokers have friends who smoke than do non-smokers[2]. It seemed reasonable, therefore, to see if a similar relationship existed in the case of drinking behaviour.

Since we already knew that the drinking habits of men and women differed considerably, it seemed best to distinguish between male and female friends' drinking habits on the questionnaire. A further extension of the concept of friends' drinking habits which we thought might strongly influence the extent of drinking amongst individuals was the proportion of friends who were perceived as heavy drinkers.

Thus, we shall be looking at the prevalence of regular drinking according to informants' views firstly on the proportion of their male and female friends who drink and secondly on the proportion of these drinkers who are seen as heavy drinkers.

(i) Prevalance of drinking behaviour by the proportion of informants' male friends who drink

In Table 2.12 we have compared the drinking behaviour of informants within five groups, distinguished according to whether they reported that "all", "most","about half", "few" or "none" of their male friends drink at all. The words "at all" were added because it appeared from pilot work that the verb 'drink' if used on its own tended to be interpreted in the restricted sense of drinking seriously or regularly.

As expected, the general trend amongst both men and women is for the proportion of regular drinkers to rise in step with the proportion of male friends perceived as drinkers. However, it is interesting that amongst men the proportion of regular drinkers is above average only for that group which considers that "all" of their male friends drink. In the case of women, however, the proportion of regular

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[1] eg. *'Adults' and Adolescents' Smoking Habits and Attitudes' - A C McKennell & R K Thomas*
'Teenagers and Alcohol'- John Davies and Barrie Stacey

[2] See *'Adults and Adolescents' Smoking Habits and Attitudes' by A C McKennell and R K Thomas pp.46-47*

Table 2.11 The distribution of drinking behaviour by sex and smoking habits

		Men					Women				
Smoking habits:		Non-drinkers	Occasional drinkers	Regular drinkers	Total	*Base*	Non-drinkers	Occasional drinkers	Regular drinkers	Total	*Base*
Non-smoker	%	7	24	69	100	*561.3*	19	42	40	100	*1049.6*
Smokes:											
≤ 4 cigarettes a day	%	3	24	72	100	*87.0*	6	51	43	100	*111.7*
5 - 9 cigarettes a day	%	7	27	66	100	*106.0*	6	57	37	100	*114.7*
10 - 14 " "	%	6	22	72	100	*184.8*	6	36	58	100	*187.7*
15 - 19 " "	%	2	19	79	100	*179.0*	6	34	60	100	*139.8*
20 - 24 " "	%	3	19	78	100	*273.0*	3	42	56	100	*196.8*
25+ " "	%	2	16	82	100	*204.0*	-	29	71	100	*54.7*
Not answered		-	*5.0*	*18.0*	*	*23.0*	*2.3*	*13.7*	*23.0*	*	*32.0*
All smokers	%	4	20	76	100	*1056.8*	5	42	54	100	*837.3*
Total	%	5	22	74	100	*1618.1*	12	42	46	100	*1886.9*

* *Base is too small for percentaging - actual figures given in italics*

Table 2.12 The distribution of drinking behaviour by the proportion of informants' male friends who drink

Table 2.12 The distribution of drinking behaviour by the proportion of informants' male friends who drink

Proportion of male friends who drink		Men					Women				
		Non-drinkers	Occasional drinkers	Regular drinkers	Total	*Base*	Non-drinkers	Occasional drinkers	Regular drinkers	Total	*Base*
All	%	3	12	85	100	*639.1*	5	38	57	100	*614.2*
Most	%	4	22	74	100	*771.0*	6	41	53	100	*767.2*
About half	%	8	48	44	100	*99.0*	21	41	38	100	*166.2*
Few	%	15	48	36	100	*85.0*	28	57	15	100	*243.7*
None	%	*6.0*	*8.0*	*1.0*	*	*15.0*	75	21	4	100	*54.7*
Don't know any men well		*1.0*	*5.0*	*1.0*	*	*7.0*	*9.1*	*9.1*	-	*	*18.2*
Don't know/not answered		-	*2.0*	-	*	*2.0*	*4.6*	*13.7*	*2.3*	*	*20.5*
Total	%	5	22	74	100	*1618.1*	12	42	46	100	*1886.9*

* *Base is too small for percentaging - actual figures given in italics*

drinkers is above average where "all" or "most" of their male friends are seen as drinkers. It should also be noted that amongst men the sharpest rise is between those who said that "about half" of their male friends drank (44% are regular drinkers) and those who said that "most" of their male friends drank (74%). Similarly amongst women the most significant rise is between those who said that "about half" of their male friends drank (38%) and "most" of their male friends drank (53%). These findings suggest that whether or not our informants are regular drinkers depends to some extent on whether drinking is perceived as the norm against their friends. The evidence cannot tell us, however, whether having a majority of friends who drink represents a positive influence of pressures towards social conformity or whether it represents a "birds of a feather" phenomenon whereby those who are *already* drinkers choose friends who are also drinkers.

Whilst we have so far focussed upon the proportion of regular drinkers in the groups being compared, it will be noticed that the proportion of non-drinkers decreases as the proportion of male friends perceived as drinkers increases.

(ii) Prevalence of drinking behaviour by the proportion of informants' female friends who drink

Table 2.13 is in similar format to Table 2.12 but classifies informants according to the proportion of female friends who were said to drink. As in Table 2.12 we find that the proportion of regular drinkers amongst men and women rises in step with the proportion of female friends perceived as drinkers. On the other hand the results differ from Table 2.12 in that a higher than average proportion of both male and female regular drinkers is found amongst those who think that about half or more of their female friends drink. Thus it seems that where it is the norm for informants' female friends to drink there is a strong likelihood that both male and female informants will be regular drinkers.

Looking at the other end of the drinking scale it should be noted that there is a significantly greater than average proportion of male and female non-drinkers only where "none" of their friends are seen as drinkers.

A further conclusion highlighted in both Table 2.12 and Table 2.13 is that the incidence of regular drinking in informants' social groups is not very sex specific. In other words, both male and female drinking habits are strongly related to the reported prevalence of drinking amongst, on the one hand, male friends, and, on the other hand, female friends.

(iii) The joint effects of the proportion of male and female friends who drink upon the prevalence of regular drinking amongst informants

In the previous two tables we have seen that regular drinking is associated with a high proportion of male friends who drink and a high proportion of female friends who drink so the next logical step is to see whether taking the two effects together improves the prediction for the prevalence of regular drinking. In Table 2.14 we find that this is confirmed, for 89% of those men who perceive "all" of their male and female friends as drinkers are themselves regular drinkers and likewise 68% of such women are regular drinkers. (These proportions are greatly in excess of the overall proportions of regular drinkers amongst men and women.)

Closer inspection of Table 2.14 and examination of Fig 2(c) reveals a systematic pattern relating to the prevalence of regular drinking amongst men. There is always a greater proportion of regular drinkers amongst those who perceive "all" rather than "most" of their male friends as drinkers. On the other hand there is very little difference in the proportion of regular drinkers amongst those who perceive "all", "most" or "about half" of their female friends as drinkers but there is a significant drop for those who perceive "few" or "none" of their female friends as drinkers.

Amongst women the results relating to the prevalence of regular drinking are less systematic. Fig 2(c) shows that where women perceive "all" of their male

Table 2.13 The distribution of drinking behaviour by the proportion of informants' female friends who drink

		Men					Women				
Proportion of female friends who drink		Non-drinkers	Occas-ional drinkers	Regular drinkers	Total	*Base*	Non-drinkers	Occas-ional drinkers	Regular drinkers	Total	*Base*
All	%	3	10	87	100	*281.3*	7	34	59	100	*313.1*
Most	%	3	19	78	100	*541.3*	5	42	57	100	*645.1*
About half	%	4	16	79	100	*277.0*	6	46	54	100	*302.4*
Few	%	6	30	65	100	*386.6*	15	57	28	100	*460.0*
None	%	18	52	31	100	*68.0*	62	32	6	100	*143.6*
Don't know any women well	%	12	26	63	100	*43.0*	*4.6*	*2.3*	*2.3*	100	*9.1*
Don't know/not answered		*1.0*	*12.0*	*8.0*	*	*21.0*	*4.6*	*6.8*	*2.3*	*	*13.7*
Total	%	5	22	74	100	*1618.1*	13	42	46	100	*1886.9*

* *Base is too small for percentaging - actual figures given in italics*

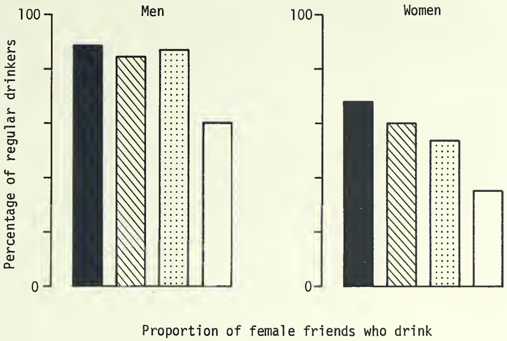
Table 2.14 The distribution of regular drinkers by sex and the proportion of informants' male and female friends who drink

Proportion of male friends who drink	Men										Women									
	Proportion of female friends who drink										Proportion of female friends who drink									
	All		Most		About half		Few or None		Total		All		Most		About half		Few or None		Total	
	%	*Base*	%	*Base*	%	*Base*	%	*Base*	%	*Base*	%	*Base*	%	*Base*	%	*Base*	%	*Base*	%	*Base*
All	89	*218.3*	85	*209.3*	87	*78.0*	60	*119.6*	85	*639.1*	68	*221.9*	60	*219.6*	53	*85.1*	35	*85.4*	57	*614.2*
Most	80	*60.0*	76	*310.0*	79	*173.0*	69	*206.0*	74	*771.0*	42	*75.2*	63	*370.8*	60	*152.5*	30	*168.7*	53	*767.2*
About half or less	*	*2.0*	*	*21.0*	*	*26.0*	34	*129.0*	38	*199.0*	38	*13.6*	23	*50.1*	45	*60.3*	21	*331.3*	22	*464.6*
Total	87	*281.3*	78	*541.3*	79	*277.0*	60	*454.6*	74	*1618.1*	59	*313.1*	57	*645.1*	54	*302.4*	23	*603.6*	46	*1886.9*

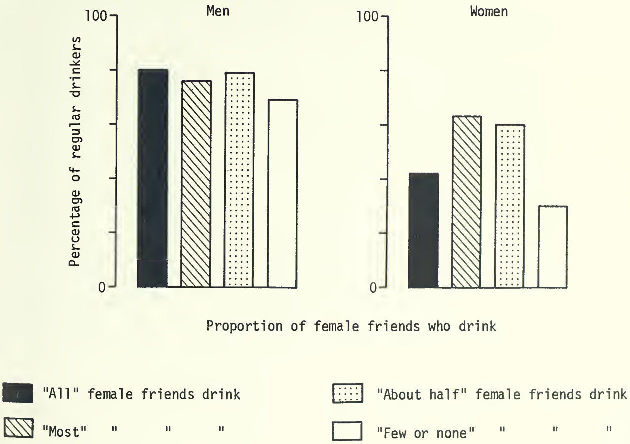
* *Base is too small for percentaging - actual figures given in italics*

Fig 2(c) Distribution of regular drinkers by sex and the proportion of male and female friends who drink

"All" male friends drink



"Most" male friends drink



friends as drinkers the proportion of regular drinkers amongst them steadily increases in step with the proportion of their female friends seen as drinkers. On the other hand, where women perceive "most" of their male friends as drinkers the highest proportions of regular drinkers are found amongst the intermediary categories of female friends' drinking ie. where "most" or "about half" of their female friends are seen as drinkers.

We also looked at the effect on non-drinking by taking into account jointly both male and female friends' drinking behaviour. Since many of the categories were very small it did not seem worthwhile to present the table. However, the highest proportion of non-drinkers were found, as expected, amongst those who reported that "few" or "none" of their male friends drank and "none" of their female friends drank (24% of men and 68% of women in these categories were non-drinkers).

(iv) Prevalence of drinking behaviour by the proportion of friends who drink and are heavy drinkers

Since insufficient numbers of informants reported that many of their female drinking friends were heavy drinkers, it has only been possible to present a table showing the distribution of drinking behaviour according to the proportion of male drinking friends reported as heavy drinkers.

It is clear from Table 2.15 that knowing the extent of heavy drinking amongst informants' male friends who are drinkers further improves the prediction for the prevalence of male regular drinking. Thus, amongst men who report that "all" of their male friends drink, those who perceive about a "half" or more of them as heavy drinkers include 91% regular drinkers compared with only 83% amongst those who perceive "few" or "none" of their male friends as heavy drinkers.

On the other hand, amongst women, it seems that having a high proportion of male friends who are heavy drinkers does not affect the proportion of regular drinkers.

In conclusion it seems that there is a differential sex effect according to the extent of heavy drinking reported by informants amongst their male friends who drink. Thus, the prevalence of regular drinking amongst men is always increased by a reported high incidence of heavy drinking amongst their male friends whilst this is not the case for women in respect of their male friends.

2.13 Summary

In considering demographic differences in drinking behaviour the first point to note is the huge difference in the prevalence of drinking between the sexes. It is the norm for me to be regular drinkers (74% of all men) whereas only 46% of women are regular drinkers. At the other extreme, over twice as many women as men are non-drinkers (12% compared to 5%).

In tables 2.16 and 2.17 we have summarised the other main demographic characteristics (listed in the order in which they appear in this chapter) which are strongly associated with regular drinking and non-drinking respectively.

Starting with regular drinking it seems that the key factor is friends' drinking behaviour. For men the highest proportion of regular drinkers (91%) is found amongst those who perceive "all" their male friends as drinkers and a "half" or more of them as heavy drinkers. For women the proportion of regular drinkers in this group is not as high as the proportion in the group who perceived "all" their male and female friends as drinkers (68% of the latter group are regular drinkers).

Other characteristics highly associated with regular drinking amongst men are being under 30 years of age, being single and having a Head of Household whose net income is over £30 a week. On the other hand, with women, although these factors are important, the overriding characteristic is belonging to the Professional social class (74% are regular drinkers) and, furthermore, it seems that being 31-50 years of age and single is more important than being under 30 years of age and single.

Table 2.15 The distribution of drinking behaviour by the proportion of informants' male friends who drink and are heavy drinkers

Proportion of male friends who drink and are heavy drinkers	Men					Women				
	Non-drinkers	Ocas-ional drinkers	Regular drinkers	Total	*Base*	Non-drinkers	Ocas-ional drinkers	Regular drinkers	Total	*Base*
All drink, about half or more are heavy drinkers	% 3	6	91	100	*155.3*	5	39	55	100	*84.1*
All drink, few or none are heavy drinkers	% 3	14	83	100	*483.8*	5	38	58	100	*530.1*
Most drink, about half or more are heavy drinkers	% 6	18	76	100	*137.0*	2	40	58	100	*96.8*
Most drink, few or none are heavy drinkers	% 4	23	74	100	*633.0*	7	40	52	100	*670.4*
About half drink, about half or more are heavy drinkers	% *1.0*	*8.0*	*8.0*	*	*17.0*	*2.3*	*6.8*	*4.6*	*	*13.7*
About half drink, few or none are heavy drinkers	% 8	48	44	100	*82.0*	22	40	38	100	*152.5*
Few drink, about half or more are heavy drinkers	% *1.0*	*1.0*	*3.0*	*	*5.0*	-	-	-	*	-
Few drink, few or none are heavy drinkers	% 15	50	35	100	*80.0*	28	57	15	100	*243.7*
None drink	% *6.0*	*8.0*	*1.0*	*	*15.0*	75	21	4	100	*54.7*
Don't know any men	% *1.0*	*7.0*	*2.0*	*	*10.0*	33	61	6	100	*41.1*
Total	% 5	22	74	100	*1618.1*	13	42	46	100	*1886.9*

**Base is too small for percentaging - actual figures given in italics*

Turning to the main indicators of non-drinking, it seems that again friends' drinking behaviour is the key factor. For both men and women the groups who perceive "few" or "none" of their male friends as drinkers or "none" of their female friends as drinkers have the highest proportions of non-drinkers (24% of men and 68% of women). A further prominent characteristic associated with non-drinking amongst both men and women is being over 65 years of age.

Table 2.16

Groups of informants amongst whom regular drinking is more prevalent than average

	Men		Women	
Demographic characteristics of group	% of regular drinkers	*Base*	% of regular drinkers	*Base*
Under 31 years of age at the time of interview	87	*336.1*	60	*494.0*
Under 31 years of age and single	90	*233.1*	65	*185.3*
31 - 50 years of age and single	71	*48.0*	70	*61.6*
Belongs to the Professional social class	76	*75.0*	74	*96.5*
Has a Head of Household whose net income is over £30 a week	83	*451.0*	64	*351.6*
Is a resident of Edinburgh, Glasgow or the Clydeside Conurbation	79	*646.6*	51	*747.2*
Has no religious affiliation	77	*695.1*	47	*508.3*
Is Roman Catholic	77	*221.0*	47	*243.4*
Smokes 15 or more cigarettes a day	80	*656.0*	59	*391.3*
"All" of informants' male friends drink	85	*639.1*	57	*614.2*
"All" of informants' female friends drink	87	*281.3*	59	*313.1*
Both "all" of informants' male and female friends drink	89	*218.3*	68	*221.9*
"All" of informants' male friends drink and a "half" or more are heavy drinkers	91	*155.3*	55	*84.1*
Total population	74	*1618.1*	46	*1886.9*

Table 2.17

Groups of informants amongst whom non-drinking is more prevalent than average

	Men		Women	
Demographic characteristics of group	% of non-drinkers	*Base*	% of non-drinkers	*Base*
Over 65 years of age at the time of interview	17	*191.0*	31	*321.5*
Is widowed, separated or divorced	14	*92.0*	26	*335.2*
Has a Head of Household whose net income is £15 a week or less	12	*295.2*	23	*569.4*
Belongs to a religious group other than the Church of Scotland or the Roman Catholic Church	10	*129.0*	26	*220.9*
Attends church at least once a week	11	*283.0*	16	*536.3*
Is a non-smoker	7	*561.3*	19	*1049.6*
"Few" or "none" of informants' male friends drink	19	*100.0*	37	*298.4*
"None" of informants' female friends drink	18	*68.0*	62	*143.6*
"Few" or "none" of informants" male friends drink and "none" of informants' female friends drink	4	*33.0*	68	*100.3*
Total population	5	*1618.1*	12	*1886.9*

3 The social and demographic background of regular drinkers

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter we examined the various social and demographic differences between our three groups of informants divided up according to their drinking behaviour, i.e. non-drinkers, occasional drinkers and regular drinkers. The purpose of this chapter, however, is to analyse in depth the social and demographic background of the group in whom we are most interested - the regular drinkers. We have decided to focus on a variable which is of central interest to this study, namely, the amount of alcohol actually consumed. Thus, whereas the previous chapter attempted to answer the general question: "Who drinks regularly/occasionally/not at all?", the present chapter is devoted to the question "Who, amongst regular drinkers, drinks (relatively) heavily/moderately/lightly."

3.2 The measure of alcoholic consumption for regular drinkers

For the purposes of this chapter we decided that the basic measure of drinking behaviour required was one that gives informants' average rate of alcoholic consumption (we have examined other measures relating to the frequency of drinking, e.g. the number of drinking occasions per week, the number of hours spent drinking per week, the types of beverage consumed; these will all be discussed in detail in Chapter 6).

We decided to base our calculation of the rate of alcoholic consumption on informants' retrospective reports of their drinking during the preceding 7 days, i.e. "last week". (There are alternative ways of deriving this measure and our reasons for rejecting them and adopting this method are given in Appendix A.) One of the main advantages of this method is that we are able to derive our measure of alcoholic consumption directly from specific and detailed records of drinking behaviour without recourse to impressionistic and possibly biassed estimates by informants of what, how much and how often they "usually" or "normally" drink.

In devising the question concerning "last week's" drinking we were aware that we would need to have as accurate as possible a measure of the actual amount drunk by our informants. It was essential to ask informants for details of beverages and amounts because we knew that, for comparative purposes, we would have to convert every single drink into a common denominator of alcoholic content.

Fortunately, the usual quantities in which alcoholic beverages are sold can be fairly readily equated in terms of the actual alcoholic content. The table overleaf gives the comparable quantities of each type of beverage which approximate to 9 grammes of absolute alcohol, defined by us as one alcoholic unit.

In order to make this conversion we had to obtain information relating not only to the total number of drinks consumed per drinking occasion but also relating to the name and the actual measure of each beverage taken. Thus, two drinks or, even, a "beer and a chaser" would be an inadequate answer since we would need to know that it was a half-pint of beer followed by a single whisky.

We were rather concerned about whether informants could remember this sort of detail but we found that, having remembered that they had been drinking at a particular time, it was fairly easy for them to remember precise details of the actual beverages and the quantities which they had consumed. Indeed, one of the main reasons why we chose to record details of "last week's" drinking rather than a typical (usual) week's drinking was because it proved a reasonably easy task for our informants to remember their drinking in the week prior to interview.

Table 3.1

The quantities of different types of alcoholic beverage equivalent to one alcoholic unit

Type of beverage	Quantity (the usual single measure in Scotland)	Alcoholic content† (equivalent to one alcoholic unit)
Spirits	1/5 gill (1 fluid oz.)	9 grammes of absolute alcohol
Fortified wines (sherry, port etc.)	2/5 gill (2 fluid oz.)	" "
Wines	1 wine glass (4 fluid oz.)	" "
Beer/lager etc.	½ pint (10 fluid oz.)	" "

† *Calculated from "Nomogram for calculating mass of alcohol in different beverages," British Medical Journal, December, 1970, p703.*

For purposes of analysis we had to convert all the various quantities of different beverages into numbers of alcoholic units. We first summed the number of alcoholic units for each drinking occasion and then for all drinking occasions "last week". It is the latter sum, the number of alcoholic units drunk "last week", that we are using as our main measure of alcoholic consumption. (See Appendix A.)

3.3 Variation in the rates of alcoholic consumption

When the total number of alcoholic units per week per informant had been calculated it became apparent that there was considerable variation; the range is from 1 to 189 alcoholic units per week. The actual distribution varies considerably between men and women as can be seen from Fig. 3(a) where we have shown the proportions of men and women drinking various quantities of alcohol per week. In fact we were not able to keep exactly the same groupings of the number of alcoholic units per week for men and for women because there were so few women who drank more than 11 alcoholic units per week. Thus, the highest grouping for women is 11 or more alcoholic units per week (4% of all women) while the highest grouping for men is 51 or more alcoholic units per week (7% of all men) since 41% of men drink 11 or more alcoholic units. In fact the highest amount consumed by a woman was 44 alcoholic units per week.

The very large difference between the amounts drunk by men and women is pinpointed by the mean number of alcoholic units consumed per week by regular drinkers shown in Table 3.2 and Figure 3(b).

It can be seen that male regular drinkers have an overall mean of 20.5 alcoholic units per week, while female regular drinkers have an overall mean of 4.8 alcoholic units per week. The disparity between men and women at the upper end of the drinking scale is shown in the highest drinking categories. The mean for the 7% of men who drank 51 or more units per week was 79.1 units, while the mean for the 4% of women who drank 11 or more units per week was 18.3 units. In fact, the mean amount drunk by the top 4% of female regular drinkers is lower than the overall mean amount drunk by *all* male regular drinkers.

Fig 3(a) Distribution of amount drunk by men and women

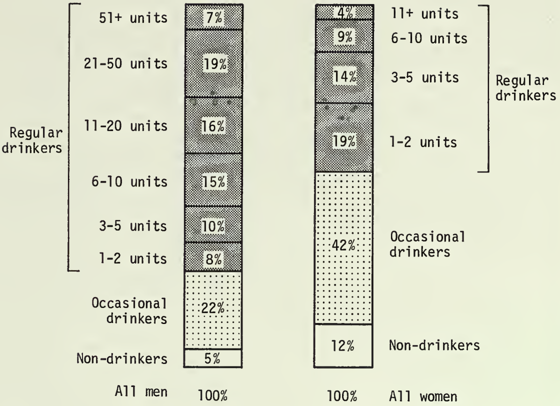
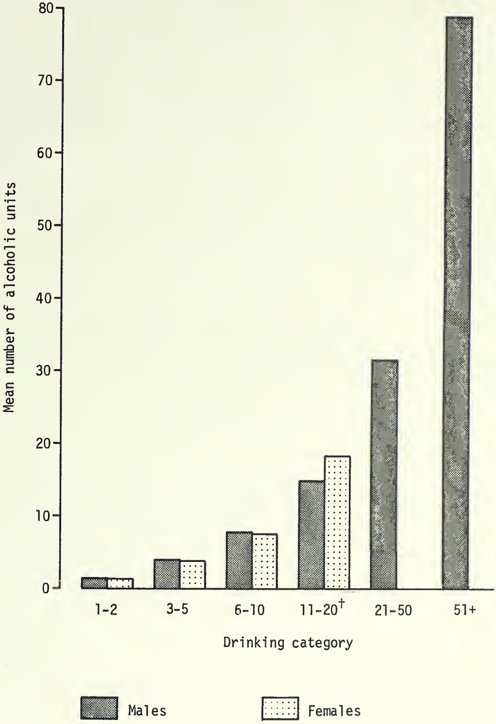


Table 3.2

Regular Drinkers: Mean amount drunk by sex and drinking category

	Male regular drinkers		Female regular drinkers	
Drinking category	Mean number of alcoholic units per week	*Base*	Mean number of alcoholic units per week	*Base*
51+	79.1	*106.3*		
21-50	31.6	*300.3*	18.3	*80.8*
11-20	14.9	*253.3*		
6-10	7.8	*241.0*	7.5	*161.3*
3-5	4.0	*159.0*	3.8	*261.6*
1-2	1.5	*132.5*	1.4	*357.7*
All regular drinkers	20.5	*1192.1*	4.8	*861.4*

Fig 3(b) Regular drinkers: Mean number of alcoholic units consumed per drinking category by sex



† *Females have a higher mean number of alcoholic units than males as this is the highest drinking category for females*

3.4 Alcoholic consumption in the context of the total population

It follows from our definition of non, occasional and regular drinking that the total amount reported as having been drunk "last week" was accounted for by that 59% of the sample who fell into the regular drinker category - in other words, 59% of the people did 100% of the drinking. When the sex of the drinker is taken into consideration, it is found that 74% of the men accounted for all the male drinking reported, while 46% of the women accounted for all the female drinking reported.

We can carry this line of analysis further by considering what proportion of the total amount of drinking was accounted for by our heaviest drinking category (ie 51 or more units per week) what proportion by the moderate and heavy drinkers combined (ie 11 or more units per week) and so on. The relevant figures for men, women and the total population respectively are shown in Table 3.3. The columns of figures in heavy type show the cumulative proportion of all that was drunk "last week" at each level of drinking while the figures in lighter type give the cumulative proportion of individuals involved at each level of drinking.

If we look at the top row of this table we find that those who drink 51 or more alcoholic units per week consume 30% of the total amount of alcohol drunk in a week. Referring to the column on the far right which gives the proportion of people in this category we find the rather staggering fact that just 3% of the total population consume 30% of all that is drunk in a week and that this consists entirely of men.

If we include the next level down, ie those who consume 21 or more units per week, it is apparent that nearly two thirds (65%) of the total amount drunk in a week is consumed by such people and that they constitute only 12% of the total population. If we move down still further to those who drink 11 or more alcoholic units per week we find that just over four-fifths (81%) of all that is drunk in a week is consumed by just over a fifth (21%) of the total population.

The bases for the first three columns of Table 3.3 are the total number of alcoholic units drunk by men, women, and the total population respectively. Percentaging on this latter base, ie the total amount drunk, it is interesting to note that overall men drank 86% and women drank 14% of all that was drunk "last week". In other words, men drank nearly six times as much alcohol as women.

Table 3.3

The distribution of all that was drunk "last week" by sex and drinking category

	Men		Women		Total population	
Minimum number of alcoholic units drank "last week"	Cumulative proportion of all male drinking	Cumulative proportion of all men	Cumulative proportion of all female drinking	Cumulative proportion of all women	Cumulative proportion of total drinking	Cumulative proportion of total population
	%	%	%	%	%	%
51+	34	7	-	-	30	3
21+	73	25	16	1	65	12
11+	89	41	36	4	81	21
6+	96	56	64	13	92	33
3+	99	66	88	27	98	45
1+	100	74	100	46	100	59
All regular drinkers	100	74	100	46	100	59
Base	*24,422.5*	*1,618.1*	*4,155.3*	*1,886.9*	*28,577.8*	*3,505.0*

3.5 Mean alcoholic consumption by age at the time of interview

The first of the demographic factors we shall be looking at is age at the time of interview, and its relationship to the mean amount drunk by regular drinkers is shown in Table 3.4 and Fig. 3(c).

Table 3.4

Regular drinkers: Mean amount drunk by sex and age at the time of interview

	Male regular drinkers		Female regular drinkers	
Age at time of interview	Mean number of alcoholic units per week	*Base*	Mean number of alcoholic units per week	*Base*
17-21	26.2	*137.1*	5.6	*109.0*
22-30	26.9	*241.0*	6.0	*187.0*
31-40	22.3	*237.0*	4.9	*180.1*
41-50	18.6	*242.0*	4.0	*139.1*
51-65	14.8	*253.0*	4.6	*173.3*
66 and over	9.5	*84.3*	2.9	*70.7*
All regular drinkers	20.5	*1192.1*	4.8	*861.4*

There is a fairly strong trend amongst both male and female regular drinkers which indicates that the younger the informant the greater the quantity of alcohol he/she is likely to consume. It is interesting, however, that for both sexes the highest amount is drunk not by the youngest age group but by those aged 21-30, probably because those aged 17-21 had only just started drinking. The only significant departure from the general trend is amongst those female regular drinkers aged 51-65 who have a relatively high mean amount.

3.6 Mean alcoholic consumption by age and marital status

Following the pattern of Chapter 2 the next factor to be examined is marital status which is shown in combination with our three age groups in Table 3.5. The overall figures for both male and female regular drinkers show that single people tend to drink more than married people who, in turn, tend to drink more than those who are widowed, separated or divorced.

Amongst men, the greatest amount of alcohol is drunk by single people aged 31-50, while amongst women this group and those single people under 30 years of age consume the highest number of alcoholic units. In both the 17-30 and 31-50 age groups we consistently find that single people drink more than married people which is presumably due, to some extent, to the latter's domestic commitments.

3.7 Mean alcoholic consumption by social class of Head of Household

In Table 3.6 and Fig 3(d), which give the mean amount drunk by male and female regular drinkers according to their social class grouping, we find a striking contrast to our findings in section 2.5. Our previous findings showed that regular drinking was more prevalent in the non-manual classes while these results show that the mean amount drunk

Fig 3(c) Regular drinkers: Mean amount drunk by sex and age at the time of interview

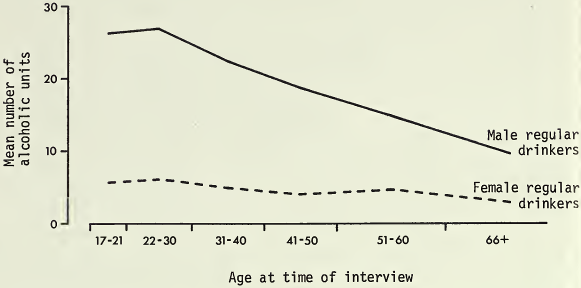


Fig 3(d) Regular drinkers: Mean amount drunk by sex and social class of Head of Household

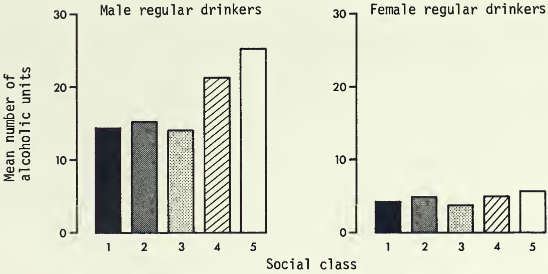


Table 3.5

Regular Drinkers: Mean amount drunk by sex, marital status and age at time of interview

Age and Marital Status	Male regular drinkers		Female regular drinkers	
	Mean number of alcoholic units per week	*Base*	Mean number of alcoholic units per week	*Base*
17-30				
single	26.9	*209.1*	6.8	*120.1*
married	25.3	*164.0*	5.1	*166.9*
widowed/separated/ divorced	*	*4.0*	*	*9.1*
31-50				
single	32.3	*34.0*	6.9	*43.3*
married	19.5	*436.0*	4.1	*250.8*
widowed/separated/ divorced	*	*9.0*	*	*25.1*
51+				
single	16.0	*30.0*	*	*22.8*
married	13.6	*257.0*	4.4	*164.2*
widowed/separated/ divorced	12.3	*48.0*	3.5	*57.0*
All single	26.3	*273.1*	6.2	*188.4*
All married	18.8	*875.0*	4.5	*581.8*
All widowed/separated/ divorced	17.0	*61.0*	4.1	*91.2*
All regular drinkers	20.5	*1192.1*	4.8	*861.4*

* *Base is too small for percentaging - actual figures given in italics.*

by regular drinkers is highest amongst the manual classes. Indeed, the Semi- and unskilled manual workers have an exceptionally high mean number of alcoholic units consumed per week - 25.2 for men and 5.6 for women.

It is clear that for both sexes the lowest mean amount drunk is found amongst those belonging to social class 3 (Other non-manual occupations). Thus, there is not a straightforward trend indicating a rise in mean amount drunk as we move from social class 1 through to social class 5 but rather a dichotomy between the non-manual class with a low mean amount drunk per week and the manual class with a high mean amount drunk per week. Moreover, this dichotomy is more pronounced amongst men than women, for whom the pattern of results is less regular.

To sum up, it seems that although the manual classes do not contain an above average proportion of regular drinkers, those who do drink regularly consume an above average number of alcoholic units per week. Conversely, amongst the non-manual classes, where regular drinking is prevalent, those who do drink regularly tend to consume a relatively small amount of alcohol.

Table 3.6

Regular drinkers: Mean amount drunk by sex and social class of Head of Household

Social class of Head of Household		Male regular drinkers		Female regular drinkers	
		Mean number of alcoholic units per week	*Base*	Mean number of alcoholic units per week	*Base*
Professional	1	14.4	*57.0*	4.2	*71.7*
Intermediate	2	15.2	*196.0*	4.8	*167.1*
Other non-manual	3	14.0	*132.0*	3.7	*130.0*
Skilled manual	4	21.3	*475.0*	4.9	*280.8*
Semi-& unskilled manual	5	25.1	*275.3*	5.6	*121.8*
Housewife		*	*33.8*	4.1	*68.4*
Inadequately described/ not answered		*	*23.0*	*	*21.5*
All regular drinkers		20.5	*1192.1*	4.8	*861.4*

** Base is too small to give a reliable mean*

3.8 Mean alcoholic consumption by age and social class of Head of Household

Since we have found strong relationships between both age and social class and the amount consumed by regular drinkers we thought it would be useful to amalgamate these two factors. Thus, Table 3.7 and Fig.3(e) show the mean number of alcoholic units consumed by informants belonging to each of the five social classes and the three age groups. (The bases in all of the cells of this table are fairly large except for those relating to the Professional social class where there is likely to be a fairly high sampling error.)

As we would expect, the table for men shows that the highest mean amount is drunk by those belonging to the Semi- and unskilled manual class aged 17-30 (mean = 30.6 alcoholic units per week). However, the table for women shows that the highest mean amount is drunk by those who belong to the Intermediate class and who are 17-30 years of age (mean = 7.1 alcoholic units per week).

At the other extreme, the lowest mean amounts are found amongst those male and female regular drinkers over 51 years of age who belong to social class 3 (Other non-manual occupations).

In general, the trends found in Sections 3.6 and 3.7 are maintained with younger people tending to drink more than older people and the manual classes tending to drink more than the non-manual classes. These findings are more marked and consistent amongst male than female regular drinkers.

Fig 3(e) Regular drinkers: Mean amount drunk by sex, age at the time of interview and social class of Head of Household

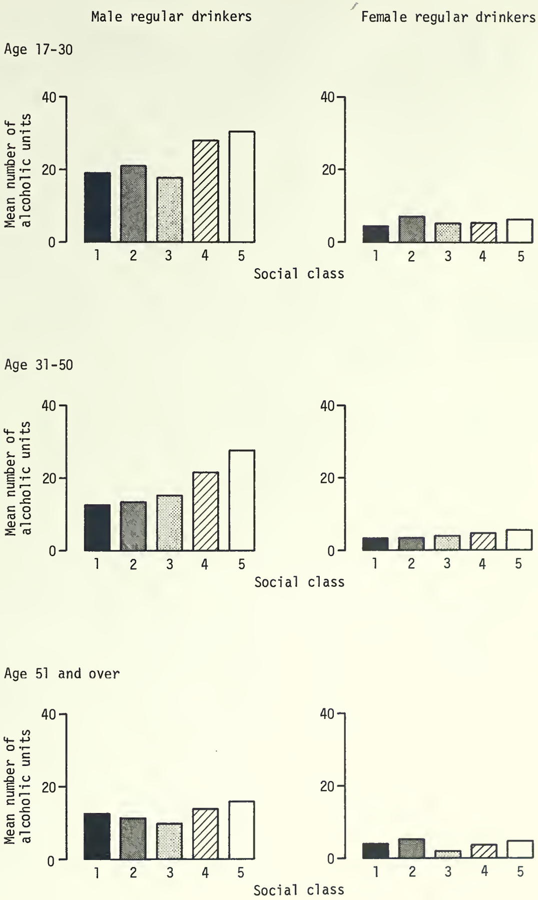


Table 3.7 Regular drinkers - Mean amount drunk per week by sex, age at the time of interview and social class of Head of Household

Social Class of Head of Household	Male regular drinkers								Female regular drinkers							
	17 - 30 years		31 - 50 years		51 years and over		All age groups		17 - 30 years		31 - 50 years		51 years and over		All age groups	
	Mean	*Base*	Mean	*Base*	Mean	*Base*	Mean	*Base*	Mean	*Base*	Mean	*Base*	Mean	*Base*	Mean	*Base*
Professional 1	19.0	*16.0*	12.6	*28.0*	12.5	*13.0*	14.4	*57.0*	4.6	*35.2*	3.4	*18.2*	4.0	*18.2*	4.2	*71.7*
Intermediate 2	21.1	*63.0*	13.3	*78.0*	11.2	*55.0*	15.2	*196.0*	7.1	*41.8*	3.5	*79.8*	5.1	*45.6*	4.8	*167.1*
Other non-manual 3	17.8	*33.0*	15.2	*55.0*	9.7	*44.0*	14.0	*132.0*	5.2	*41.0*	4.0	*45.6*	2.0	*43.3*	3.7	*130.0*
Skilled manual 4	28.0	*137.0*	21.6	*208.0*	13.9	*130.0*	21.3	*475.0*	5.6	*109.9*	4.8	*114.0*	3.8	*57.0*	4.9	*280.8*
Semi-& unskilled manual 5	30.6	*94.3*	27.7	*98.0*	15.9	*83.0*	25.2	*275.3*	6.4	*39.8*	5.5	*45.6*	4.9	*36.5*	5.6	*121.8*
Total†	26.6	*378.1*	20.4	*479.0*	13.6	*335.0*	20.5	*1192.1*	5.8	*296.0*	4.5	*319.2*	4.1	*243.9*	4.8	*861.4*

†*Includes those whose Head of Household is a housewife and Don't know/not answered categories.*

3.9 Mean alcoholic consumption by income of Head of Household

Having found a strong trend showing that the proportion of regular drinkers increased with the income of the Head of Household (Section 2.7) we thought it would be useful to look at the relationship between the latter and the mean amount drunk by regular drinkers.

Table 3.8

Regular Drinkers - Mean amount drunk by sex and income of the Head of Household

Income of Head of Household per week	Male regular drinkers		Female regular drinkers	
	Mean number of alcoholic units per week	*Base*	Mean number of alcoholic units per week	*Base*
Over £40	16.7	*180.0*	5.3	*109.2*
Over £30 to £40	23.8	*194.0*	4.2	*115.0*
Over £25 to £30	18.4	*217.0*	5.0	*147.9*
Over £20 to £25	21.8	*209.0*	5.6	*114.0*
Over £15 to £20	18.1	*142.0*	4.4	*98.8*
Over £10 to £15	23.3	*79.6*	4.7	*94.2*
Up to and including £10	21.9	*93.6*	3.8	*95.8*
Don't know	23.1	*51.0*	4.9	*63.8*
Refusal and Not answered	*	*26.0*	*	*22.8*
All regular drinkers	20.5	*1192.1*	4.8	*861.4*

* *Base is too small to give a reliable mean*

It is clear from Table 3.8 that there is no definite trend relating the mean amount drunk to income. Amongst male regular drinkers it is apparent that those whose Head of Household earns between £10 and £15 net per week or between £30 and £40 net per week drink the largest quantities of alcohol per week. On the other hand, amongst female regular drinkers the highest amount is drunk by those whose Head of Household earns between £20 and £25 net per week or over £40 net per week.

3.10 Mean alcoholic consumption by area of residence

In Table 3.9 it can be seen that the highest mean amount is drunk by male regular drinkers who reside in Edinburgh. This is consistent with our findings in Section 2.8 where we found the highest proportion of regular drinkers living in Edinburgh.

Amongst female regular drinkers there is no real difference in the mean amount drunk according to area of residence except that those who reside in Aberdeen or Dundee tend to drink less than those living elsewhere.

Table 3.9

Regular drinkers: Mean amount drunk by sex and area of residence

	Male regular drinkers		Female regular drinkers	
Area of residence	Mean number of alcoholic units per week	*Base*	Mean number of alcoholic units per week	*Base*
Clydeside Conurbation	19.5	*222.3*	4.9	*125.1*
Glasgow	23.0	*185.0*	5.0	*166.1*
Edinburgh	26.7	*115.3*	4.8	*90.9*
Aberdeen and Dundee	19.3	*87.0*	3.2	*57.7*
Other Urban	19.9	*323.0*	5.0	*239.1*
Rural	17.9	*259.6*	5.0	*182.4*
All regular drinkers	20.5	*1192.1*	4.8	*861.4*

3.11 Mean alcoholic consumption by religious affiliation and frequency of church attendance

Table 3.10, which gives the mean amount drunk by regular drinkers according to religious affiliation, including those who have no religious affiliation, confirms our earlier findings on the prevalence of regular drinking. Those who have no religious affiliation or who belong to the Roman Catholic faith show a relatively high mean number of alcoholic units consumed "last week" (and a high proportion of regular drinkers - see Section 2.10).

Turning to Table 3.11, which shows the relationship between regular drinkers' church attendance and the mean amount they drank "last week", we can see a general trend indicating that more is drunk by those who attend church least frequently. This supports our previous findings on the prevalence of regular drinking amongst men (ie more prevalent as church attendance declines) but departs a little from the findings for women where regular drinking was most prevalent amongst the middle categories of church attendance (ie less than once a week and less than once a month).

3.12 Mean alcoholic consumption by smoking habits

In Section 2.11 we found that regular drinking was more prevalent amongst smokers than non-smokers and, in particular, amongst those who smoked at least 25 cigarettes a day. Table 3.12 shows that the mean amount drunk by male and female regular drinkers is greater if they are smokers than non-smokers.

For male regular drinkers the greatest amount is drunk by those who smoke most heavily, ie 25 or more cigarettes a day, while for female regular drinkers, it is not the latter group but those who smoke between 20 and 25 cigarettes a day who are likely to drink the most.

Table 3.10

Regular drinkers: Mean amount drunk "last week" by sex and religious affiliation

Religious affiliation	Male regular drinkers		Female regular drinkers	
	Mean number of alcoholic units per week	*Base*	Mean number of alcoholic units per week	*Base*
No religious affiliation	23.6	*536.1*	6.1	*239.1*
Church of Scotland	15.8	*389.0*	4.1	*419.9*
Roman Catholic	23.1	*177.0*	6.0	*114.7*
Other Protestant denominations	11.8	*64.0*	3.5	*67.1*
Sects and non-Christian religions	*	*21.0*	*	*18.2*
Not answered	*	*5.0*	*	*2.3*
All regular drinkers	20.5	*1192.1*	4.8	*861.4*

* *Base is too small to give a reliable mean*

Table 3.11

Regular drinkers: Mean amount drunk by sex and church attendance

Frequency of church attendance	Male regular drinkers		Female regular drinkers	
	Mean number of alcoholic units per week	*Base*	Mean number of alcoholic units per week	*Base*
No religious affiliation	23.6	*536.1*	6.1	*239.1*
Attends church:				
More than once a week	12.5	*35.0*	3.4	*38.5*
About once a week	16.1	*148.0*	4.1	*151.2*
Less than once a week but more than once a month	14.2	*76.0*	3.8	*125.4*
Less than once a month	19.2	*256.0*	4.7	*232.0*
Never attends church	20.7	*139.0*	4.9	*75.2*
All regular drinkers	20.5	*1192.1*	4.8	*861.4*

Table 3.12

Regular Drinkers: Mean amount drunk by sex and smoking habits

Smoking habits	Male regular drinkers: Mean number of alcoholic units per week	Male regular drinkers: *Base*	Female regular drinkers: Mean number of alcoholic units per week	Female regular drinkers: *Base*
Non-smoker	16.4	*385.3*	3.8	*415.4*
Smokes:				
Up to 4 cigarettes a day	16.1	*63.0*	6.0	*47.9*
5 - 9 " "	16.8	*70.0*	3.9	*42.0*
10 - 14 " "	21.9	*132.8*	5.1	*108.2*
15 - 19 " "	20.5	*142.0*	5.2	*84.1*
20 - 24 " "	20.6	*213.0*	8.0	*109.2*
25 + " "	32.4	*168.0*	5.7	*38.8*
Other	*	*18.0*	-	*16.0*
All smokers	22.4	*806.8*	5.8	*446.0*
All regular drinkers	20.5	*1192.1*	4.8	*861.4*

* *Base is too small to give a reliable mean*

3.13 Mean alcoholic comsumption by perceived drinking behaviour of friends

The purpose of this section is to find out if the mean amount of alcohol consumed by regular drinkers is related to informants' perceptions of the proportions of their male and female friends who drink. We found in Section 2.12 that the key factor associated with regular drinking amongst men and women was informants' perception of "all" of their friends as drinkers.

(i) Mean alcoholic consumption by the proportion of informants' male friends who drink

It is clear from Table 3.13 that the mean amount drunk by male and female regular drinkers tends to rise in step with the proportion of their male friends perceived as drinkers. However, it is only amongst those who state that "all" of their male friends drink that the level of drinking is above the overall average for both men and women.

(ii) Mean alcoholic consumption by the proportion of informants' female friends who drink

Similarly, it is evident from Table 3.14 that the mean amount drunk by male and female regular drinkers also increases in step with the proportion of their female friends perceived as drinkers. The results also show that it is only amongst those informants who consider that "all" of their female friends drink that there is a much greater than average level of drinking.

(iii) Mean alcoholic consumption by proportion of informants' male and female friends who drink

Since we have established that the highest mean number of alcoholic units is consumed by those who see "all" of their male friends and "all" of their female friends as drinkers it seemed sensible to look at the joint effect of these two factors. We would expect to find the greatest amount drunk by those who report that both "all" of their male friends drink and "all" of their female friends drink.

In fact, Table 3.15 shows that, amongst female regular drinkers, we do find the highest mean amount drunk by those who report that "all" of their male friends and "all" of their female friends drink (mean = 6.4 alcoholic units). However, amongst male regular drinkers, it is not this group but those who report that "all" of their male friends drink and "most" of their female friends drink who themselves consume the greatest quantity of alcohol.

There is a general trend in the table for men showing that the proportion of male friends seen as drinkers seems to be an important factor in predicting a high level of drinking but there is little variation according to the proportion of female friends seen as drinkers. On the other hand, amongst women there is no consistent pattern which leads us to consider one factor as more important than the other. These findings are highlighted in Fig.3(f).

(iv) Mean alcoholic consumption by the proportion of male friends who drink and are heavy drinkers

Lastly, it is worth looking at Table 3.16 which gives the mean amount drunk by regular drinkers according to the proportion of their male friends who they report as drinkers and the proportion of the latter seen as heavy drinkers.

Table 3.13

Regular Drinkers - Mean amount drunk by sex and the proportion of informants' male friends who drink

	Male regular drinkers		Female regular drinkers	
Proportion of male friends who drink	Mean number of alcoholic units per week	*Base*	Mean number of alcoholic units per week	*Base*
All	25.1	*544.1*	5.7	*351.2*
Most	17.3	*571.0*	4.6	*406.5*
About half	14.9	*44.0*	2.7	*62.6*
Few	7.1	*31.0*	3.0	*36.5*
None	*	*1.0*	*	*2.3*
Don't know any men well	*	*1.0*	*	*2.3*
All regular drinkers	20.5	*1191.1*	4.8	*861.4*

** Base is too small to give a reliable mean.*

As we found with the prevalence of regular drinking, the results differ between men and women. An exceptionally high amount of alcohol is drunk by those male regular drinkers who report that "all" of their male friends drink and "about half or more" of the latter are heavy drinkers (mean = 37.9 alcoholic units). In general it seems that, amongst male regular drinkers, having a high proportion of heavy drinking male friends corresponds with a high level of drinking. In fact, it is apparently more important than having a high proportion of male friends who drink, since the mean amount drunk is higher for those who report that "most" of their male friends and "at least half" are heavy drinkers than for those who report that "all" of their male friends drink but "few" or "none" are heavy drinkers. Thus, heavy drinking amongst men is mainly associated with having a high proportion of male friends who are also heavy drinkers.

On the other hand, amongst female regular drinkers there is a lower than average level of drinking amongst those who report that "all" of their male friends drink and "at least half" of them are heavy drinkers. There is not a consistent pattern with reference to heavy drinking since the mean amount drunk is approximately equal for those who report that "all" of their male friends drink but "few" or "none" are heavy drinkers and those who report that "most" of their male friends drink and "at least half" of them are heavy drinkers. It should be noted, however, that both of these groups have a lower mean than those who report that both "all" of their male friends drink and "all" of their female friends drink.

To sum up, it seems that a high level of drinking amongst men is mainly associated with having a high proportion of male friends who are heavy drinkers while a high level of drinking amongst women is related to perceiving "all" friends (whether male or female) as drinkers (but not necessarily as heavy drinkers).

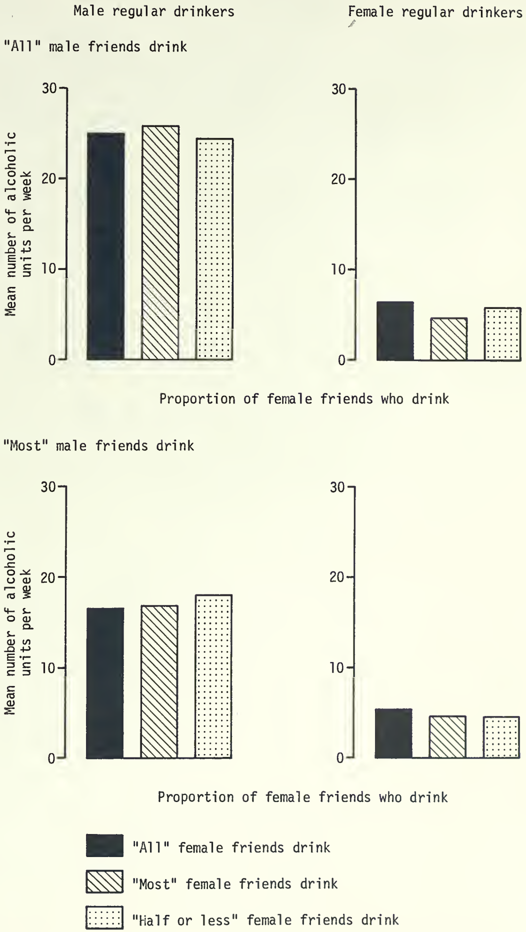
Table 3.14

Regular drinkers: Mean amount drunk by sex and the proportion of informants' female friends who drink

	Male regular drinkers		Female regular drinkers	
Proportion of female friends who drink	Mean number of alcoholic units per week	*Base*	Mean number of alcoholic units per week	*Base*
All	23.2	*244.3*	6.2	*185.4*
Most	20.8	*422.3*	4.6	*367.5*
About half	18.9	*220.0*	5.0	*163.9*
few	19.8	*249.6*	3.7	*131.0*
None	*	*21.0*	*	*9.1*
Don't know any women well	*	*27.0*	*	*2.3*
Don't know/ Not answered	*	*8.0*	*	*2.3*
All regular drinkers	20.5	*1192.1*	4.8	*861.4*

* *Base is too small to give a reliable mean.*

Fig 3(f) Regular drinkers: Mean amount drunk by sex and the proportion of informants' male and female friends who drink



3.14 Summary

1. Distribution of alcoholic consumption "last week"

Male regular drinkers on average consume a much larger quantity of alcohol than female regular drinkers. (Means = 20.5 and 4.8 alcoholic units per week respectively.)

59% of the total population (i.e. all those who are regular drinkers) do all the drinking that is undertaken in a week. However, 30% of all that is drunk in a week is consumed by only 3% of the total population. This group comprises entirely those men who drink at least 51 alcoholic units per week. Furthermore, over four-fifths of all that is drunk in a typical week is consumed by just over one-fifth of the total population.

It seems that 86% of all that is drunk in a typical week is consumed by men and only 14% by women.

2. Social and demographic characteristics of those who drink an above average amount

In Table 3.17 we have shown the particular social and demographic characteristics associated with an above average level of drinking. We have also given the proportion of regular drinkers within each group so that the results can be compared with those in Chapter 2.

It is clear that amongst men the main characteristic associated with both regular drinking and drinking an above average amount is seeing "all" male friends as drinkers and reporting that at "least half" of them are heavy drinkers. On the other hand, amongst women the main characteristic associated with regular drinking is belonging to the Professional social class (see Section 2.13), while the characteristic associated with the highest mean amount is smoking at least 20 cigarettes a day.

Amongst both male and female regular drinkers those who are single and between 31 and 50 years of age are likely to drink a relatively large amount of alcohol. To a lesser extent this is true also of those who are single and under 31 years of age (there is a very high proportion of men who are regular drinkers in this group). None of the other factors are really outstanding in being associated with a relatively high level of drinking.

Table 3.15 Regular drinkers: Mean amount drunk by sex and the proportion of informants' male and female friends who drink

	Male regular drinkers								Female regular drinkers							
	Proportion of female friends who drink								Proportion of male friends who drink							
Proportion of male friends who drink	All		Most		About half or less		Total		All		Most		About half or less		Total	
	Mean	*Base*	Mean	*Base*	Mean	*Base*	Mean	*Base*	Mean	*Base*	Mean	*Base*	Mean	*Base*	Mean	*Base*
All	24.9	*194.3*	25.8	*177.3*	24.4	*160.6*	25.1	*544.1*	6.4	*151.2*	4.7	*122.8*	5.8	*75.0*	5.7	*351.2*
Most	16.5	*48.0*	16.8	*236.0*	18.0	*273.0*	17.3	*571.0*	5.4	*31.9*	4.6	*233.3*	4.5	*141.4*	4.6	*406.5*
About half or less	*	*1.0*	*	*9.0*	9.0	*57.0*	10.3	*76.0*	*	*2.3*	*	*11.4*	2.8	*87.6*	2.8	*101.4*
Total	23.2	*244.3*	20.8	*422.3*	19.0	*490.6*	20.5	*1192.1*	6.2	*185.4*	4.6	*367.5*	4.3	*304.0*	4.8	*861.4*

** Base is too small to give a reliable mean.*

Regular Drinkers: Mean amount drunk by sex and the proportion of informants' male friends who drink and are heavy drinkers

Proportion of male friends who drink and are heavy drinkers	Male regular drinkers		Female regular drinkers	
	Mean number of alcoholic units per week	*Base*	Mean number of alcoholic units per week	*Base*
All drink, about half or more are heavy drinkers	37.9	*141.3*	3.8	*46.6*
All drink, few or none are heavy drinkers	20.6	*402.8*	6.0	*304.6*
Most drink, about half or more are heavy drinkers	29.4	*104.0*	6.0	*55.7*
Most drink, few or none are heavy drinkers	14.7	*466.0*	4.4	*350.8*
About half drink, half or more are heavy drinkers	*	*8.0*	*	*4.6*
About half drink, few or none are heavy drinkers	10.6	*36.0*	2.6	*58.0*
Few drink, about half or more are heavy drinkers	*	*3.0*	-	-
Few drink, few or none are heavy drinkers	*	*28.0*	3.0	*36.5*
None drink	*	*1.0*	*	*2.3*
Don't know any men well	*	*1.0*	*	*2.3*
All regular drinkers	20.5	*1192.1*	4.8	*861.4*

** Base is too small to give a reliable mean.*

Table 3.17

Demographic characteristics of regular drinkers who consume an above average number of alcoholic units per week.

Demographic characteristic	Men: Mean number of alcoholic units by regular drinkers	Men: % of regular drinkers	Women: Mean number of alcoholic units by regular drinkers	Women: % of regular drinkers
Under 31 years of age at the time of interview	26.6	87	5.8	60
Under 31 years of age and single	26.9	90	6.7	64
Between 31 and 50 years of age and single	32.3	71	6.9	70
Belongs to the Professional social class	14.4	76	4.2	74
Belongs to the semi-skilled and unskilled social class	25.2	73	5.6	38
Is a resident of Edinburgh	26.6	82	4.8	52
Has no religious affiliation	23.6	77	6.1	47
Smokes 20 or more cigarettes a day	25.8	80	7.4	59
"All" of informants' male friends drink	25.1	85	5.7	57
"All" of informants' female friends drink	23.2	87	6.2	59
Both "all" of informants' male and female friends drink	24.9	89	6.4	68
"All" of informants' male friends drink and a "half" or more are heavy drinkers	37.9	91	3.8	55
Total population	20.5	74	4.8	46

4 Parental drinking habits

4.1 Introduction

The results of the previous chapter have shown that drinking habits are very strongly associated with individuals' social and economic positions and with their general life styles. It is known that social habits and life styles tend to be passed on from one generation to the next through the home situation where parental habits and attitudes have a fairly strong, although not necessarily overt, influence on informants' behaviour. For this reason it seemed worthwhile to question members of the survey sample about their parents' drinking behaviour and about the effect which this may or may not have had on informants' own drinking habits and attitudes.

There are two aspects of parental drinking habits which we feel are both interesting and relevant to a study of the development of drinking behaviour. First, it is useful to compare the drinking climates of the homes in which informants of different generations grew up. We asked informants to describe their parents' drinking habits when they (ie informants) were young; thus, by dividing informants into three age groups, we are able to identify the drinking habits of parents of one generation ago (informants aged 17-30), two generations ago (informants aged 31-50) and lastly three generations ago (informants aged 51 and over). Furthermore, we are able to select within our sample those informants who are themselves parents of young children today so that we have information relating to the drinking habits of the current generation of parents.

The second and more directly relevant part of this analysis is concerned with investigating the effects of parental drinking upon informants' drinking habits. As this is a fairly complex area it seemed most useful to carry out this analysis in two parts. Initially we have attempted to ascertain the influence of mothers' and fathers' drinking separately on informants' drinking habits but subsequently we also thought it worthwhile to look at the joint effect taking into account simultaneously both parents' drinking habits. By looking at both parents' drinking habits together we can obtain a full picture of the home situation confronting each informant when he/she was young.

A note of caution about the interpretation of the results should be added at this point. It is important to bear in mind that we are concerned with retrospective questioning; informants have been asked to recall situations which existed anything up to sixty or seventy years ago and this clearly allows much scope for memory failure and memory bias. However, we deliberately chose fairly simple factual questions about parental drinking habits so that we hope that these effects should be minimised. The aspects of parental drinking covered in the questionnaire were as follows: whether or not each parent did drink; if so, about how frequently did they drink and how did informants feel about their drinking at the time; if not, what did informants think were the reasons for their parents' abstinence [see Q.22 (a)-(c)].

4.2 Changes in parental drinking habits over successive generations

As we stated earlier, we are able to identify the drinking habits of parents of previous generations by dividing up our sample of informants into the usual three age groups, and treating these informants aged 17-30, 31-50, and 51 and over, as reporting the drinking habits of parents of roughly one generation, two generations and three generations ago respectively. We are also able to select within our sample those informants who have children under 16 and so we can classify them as parents of the present generation. Since we obtained information about whether or not each adult member of the informant's household drank (Q.33) we are able to classify this present generation of parents in the same way as we can with the retrospective data. (The only omission from the data on the current generation of parents is the equivalent of the category of parents, obtained from retrospective questioning, who were reported to be deceased or about whom nothing was known of their drinking habits. Since this category of parents is so small its omission amongst the current generation of parents is most unlikely to affect the results.)

It should be pointed out, however, that there is one major statistical limitation to this analysis. Our sample of parents of previous generations will be biased in favour of parents who had large families. The reason for this is that in any random sample of the general population children from larger families have a higher chance of selection than those from smaller families, simply because there are proportionately more of the former in the population. In principal this can be rectified by reweighting the data according to the size of the family to which the informant (as a child) belonged but this information is not available for this survey. Thus, any comparisons drawn from the retrospective data are between the drinking habits of the parents of our informants and not of three unbiased samples of parents. On the other hand, the present generation of parents represented by our informants is an unbiased sample of parents.

In Table 4.1, therefore, we have given the distribution of parental drinking habits, based on the simple criterion of whether or not each parent drank, for the parents of our three age groups of informants and lastly for informants who are parents of children today. Comparing first of all the drinking habits of the parents of our three age groups of informants it is obvious that there has been a dramatic rise in the proportion of families where both parents drank (21% of parents of informants aged 51 and over compared with 56% of parents of informants aged 17-30). On the other hand, there has only been a slight drop in the proportion of families where neither parent drank. The main reason, therefore, for the increase in the number of families where both parents drank is that there has been a huge increase in the number of mothers who drink, which is demonstrated by the figures given in the third row of the table.

Looking now at the far right column which shows the distribution of drinking habits amongst sample parents it can be seen that the proportion of families where both parents drink is now very high (87%). However, with this group of parents it seems that not only is the proportion of drinking mothers very high (91%), but also the proportion of families where both parents are abstainers is now practically non-existent (1%). In fact, the proportion of mothers who drink is now as high as the proportion of fathers who drink (92%).

In conclusion, it seems that drinking has become increasingly more prevalent amongst parents in recent years so that it has now become the norm for both mother and father to drink in the overwhelming majority of families. This trend is mainly the result of more mothers starting to drink but there is an additional factor amongst our sample parents which is the virtual disappearance of families where both parents abstain from drinking.

4.3 The method of analysis used to examine the effects of parental drinking on informants' drinking habits

It seemed highly likely that mothers' and fathers' drinking habits might differentially affect informants' drinking habits. Therefore we have carried out this analysis by first looking at the effect of fathers' drinking, secondly at the effect of mothers' drinking and lastly at the joint effect of both parents' drinking, on informants' drinking habits.

We have chosen to examine the effects on informants' drinking habits in two ways. Initially we shall relate whether the informant was a regular, occasional or non-drinker to parental drinking characteristics; subsequently we shall examine amongst our regular drinkers how their current level of drinking is related to the drinking habits of their parents. Thus, we are basically following the pattern of Chapters 2 and 3 where we looked at the effect of demographic factors, firstly, on the prevalence of drinking behaviour and, secondly, on the actual amount consumed by regular drinkers.

Table 4.1

The distribution of parental drinking habits over four generations

Parental drinking habits	Parents of informants aged 17-30	Parents of informants aged 31-50	Parents of informants aged 51+	Parents of all informants	Sample parents' (informants with children under 16)
	%	%	%	%	%
Both father and mother drank	56	32	21	34	87
Mother only drank (father deceased†)	3	4	2	3	4
Father only drank (Mother did not drink††)	21	40	46	38	6
Neither parent drank	18	20	26	22	1
Parents deceased (Nothing known about parents' drinking)	1	2	1	1	†††
One parent did not drink, other parent deceased	1	1	1	1	-
Total mothers who drank	59	36	24	37	91
Total fathers who drank	77	72	68	72	92
Not answered	-	-	-	-	1
Total	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*930.0*	*1204.4*	*1366.0*	*3505.0*	*1251.3*

† *Included in this category are a few cases where nothing was known about father's drinking.*

†† *Included in this category are a few cases where nothing was known about mother's drinking.*

††† *This category is auotmatically nil since the parents of today were those informants willing to co-operate in this survey (and who obviously knew about their own habits)*

4.4 Prevalence of drinking by fathers' frequency of drinking

In Table 4.2 we have shown how informants' drinking behaviour is distributed amongst the different frequency categories of fathers' drinking. If we look at the table for men it is clear that as fathers' frequency of drinking increases so does the proportion of regular drinkers amongst informants. However, it should be noted that the most frequent category of fathers' drinking, viz four or more times a week, does not produce the highest proportion of regular drinkers. Instead, it is those fathers who drink either two or three times a week who seem to have the highest proportion of sons who drink regularly (82%). (To be strictly correct the table shows that those informants whose fathers were deceased when they were young are the most likely to be regular drinkers but the base for this category is very small.) Conversely, the highest proportion of non-drinkers is found amongst those who had fathers who were themselves non-drinkers.

If we now concentrate on the table for women we do not find that regular drinking increases with the frequency of fathers' drinking. The proportion of regular drinkers is highest amongst daughters who had fathers who drank two or three times a week or less than once a week. In fact the proportion of regular drinkers amongst daughters who had fathers who drank most frequently, ie four or more times a week, is below the average for women as a whole. It seems, therefore, that daughters tend to react to very frequent drinking on the part of their fathers by themselves refraining from regular drinking. Thus, when fathers drank four or more times per week the proportion of regular drinkers amongst daughters is below average while the proportion of occasional drinkers is above average. In other words it is not a total reaction since this would have meant an above average proportion of non-drinkers, but a slight reaction favouring a more moderate type of drinking. It sould be mentioned that regular drinking amongst women is highest in families where their father was deceased but, as with men, not much importance should be attached to this group as the base is very small.

There is no general trend in the relationship between fathers' frequency of drinking and non-drinking amongst their daughters. In other words, although the proportion of daughters who are non-drinkers is highest when their fathers were themselves non-drinkers (25%) it is not lowest when fathers drank most frequently (10%) but, instead, when fathers drank less than once a week (4%). Therefore it seems that moderate drinking on the part of fathers produces fewer non-drinking daughters than regular drinking on the part of fathers.

These results are highlighted in the top half of Fig. 4(a) where the proportions of regular, occasional and non-drinkers amongst men and women are shown for each frequency category of fathers' drinking.

4.5 Prevalence of drinking by mothers' frequency of drinking

In Table 4.3 and in the bottom half of Fig 4(a) we have presented the distribution of drinking behaviour amongst men and women according to their mothers' frequency of drinking. Since mothers tend to drink less than fathers we have had to amalgamate the two highest frequency categories of drinking so that the most frequent category of mothers' drinking is twice or more per week.

First of all, if we look at the influence of mothers' drinking on their sons' drinking behaviour it is clear that in general as mothers' frequency of drinking increases so does the prevalence of regular drinking amongst sons. However, as we can see from the table and the diagram there is no difference in the proportion of regular drinkers between the two most frequent categories of mothers' drinking behaviour. Conversely, the highest proportion of non-drinkers amongst sons is found where their mothers were also non-drinkers.

Turning to the influence of mothers' drinking on daughters' drinking behaviour it can be seen that regular drinking amongst daughters does increase with mothers' frequency of drinking. Indeed, the proportion of regular drinkers amongst women who had mothers who drank twice or more per week is strikingly high at 73% (equivalent to the average proportion of regular drinkers amongst men - 74%). This result for mothers is in contrast to that for fathers shown in Table 4.2.

Fig 4(a) Distribution of drinking behaviour by sex and fathers' and mothers' drinking habits respectively

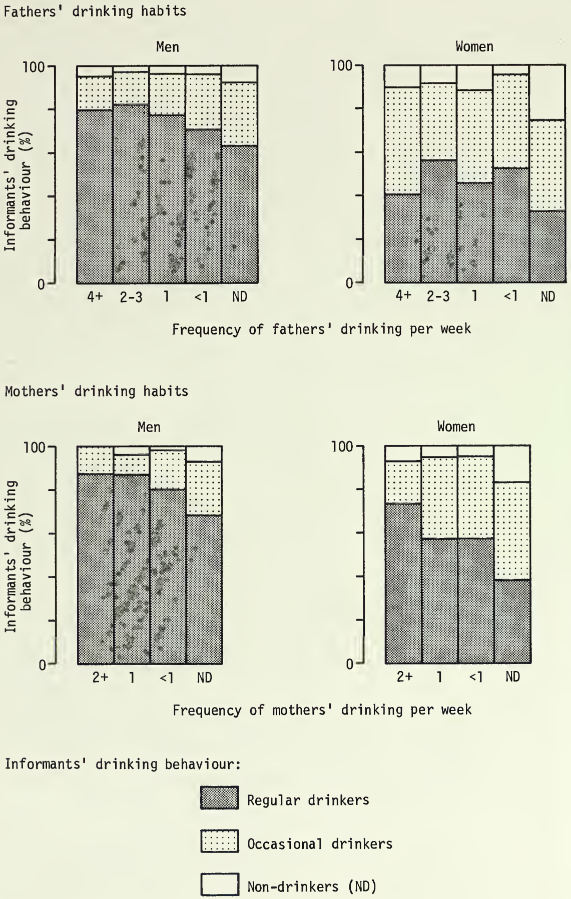


Table 4.2 The distribution of drinking behaviour by sex and fathers' drinking habits

Father drank:		Men					Women				
		Non drinkers	Occa-sional drinkers	Regular drinkers	Total	*Base*	Non drinkers	Occa-sional drinkers	Regular drinkers	Total	*Base*
Four or more times a week	%	5	17	79	100	*198.0*	10	49	40	100	*172.7*
Two or three times a week	%	3	15	82	100	*288.0*	8	35	56	100	*259.4*
Once a week	%	4	19	77	100	*350.6*	11	43	46	100	*466.5*
Less than once a week (occasional drinker)	%	4	27	70	100	*342.0*	4	43	53	100	*397.7*
Father did not drink	%	8	29	63	100	*343.3*	25	42	33	100	*479.3*
Father deceased	%	-	12	88	100	*41.3*	5	26	68	100	*43.3*
Nothing known about father's drinking	%	*2.0*	*3.0*	*23.0*	*	*28.0*	10	40	50	100	*45.3*
Not answered		*2.0*	*9.0*	*16.0*	*	*27.0*	-	*11.4*	*11.4*	*	*22.8*
Total	%	5	22	74	100	*1618.1*	12	42	46		*1886.9*

* *Base is too small for percentaging - actual figures given in italics*

Table 4.3 The distribution of drinking behaviour by sex and mothers' drinking habits

Mother drank:		Men					Women				
		Non drinkers	Occa-sional drinkers	Regular drinkers	Total	*Base*	Non drinkers	Occa-sional drinkers	Regular drinkers	Total	*Base*
Twice or more a week	%	-	13	87	100	*46.0*	7	20	73	100	*67.1*
About once a week	%	4	10	87	100	*114.6*	6	38	57	100	*102.0*
Less than once a week	%	2	18	80	100	*459.3*	5	38	57	100	*496.9*
Mother did not drink	%	7	25	68	100	*943.3*	17	45	38	100	*1145.7*
Mother deceased		-	*12.0*	*4.0*	*	*16.0*	*2.3*	*16.4*	*11.4*	*	*29.6*
Nothing known about mother's drinking		-	*19.0*	*8.0*	*	*27.0*	*2.3*	*6.8*	*16.0*	*	*25.1*
Not answered		-	*4.0*	*7.0*	*	*11.0*	-	*13.7*	*6.8*	*	*20.5*
Total	%	5	22	74	100	*1618.1*	12	42	46	100	*1886.9*

* *Base is too small for percentaging - actual figures given in italics*

The relationship between mothers' drinking habits and the prevalence of non-drinking amongst daughters is the same as that for sons with the highest proportion of non-drinkers being found amongst those whose mothers did not drink. It is clear, therefore, that the more frequently their mothers drank the more likely are informants to be regular drinkers. This is in contrast to fathers' frequency of drinking which was directly related to sons' but not to daughters' frequency of drinking.

4.6 Prevalence of regular drinking by both mothers' and fathers' frequency of drinking

Since we have established that mothers' and fathers' frequency of drinking are related to regular drinking amongst informants it seemed useful to ascertain if the main trends were still present, or if there were any interactions, when both parents' frequency of drinking were taken into account. Therefore in Table 4.4 and Fig 4(b) we have given the proportions of regular drinkers within each category of fathers' frequency of drinking and for three categories of mothers' frequency of drinking, viz mother drank at least once a week, less than once a week, mother did not drink[1].

From the analysis in the previous two sections we would expect to find the highest proportion of regular drinkers amongst sons who had mothers who drank at least once a week and fathers who drank two or three times a week. In general this does seem to be confirmed, for regular drinking is most prevalent when both mothers and fathers drank at least once a week. In fact the highest proportion of regular drinkers is found where mothers drank at least once a week and fathers drank about once a week but this proportion is only slightly higher than that given for those who had fathers who drank twice or more often per week. Thus we can say that regular drinking amongst sons will be greatest when their mothers and fathers drink at least once a week. Conversely we can see from the table that regular drinking amongst sons is lowest where neither of their parents drank.

As with sons we would expect to find the highest proportion of regular drinkers amongst daughters who had mothers who drank very frequently and fathers who drank two or three times a week which is, in fact, confirmed by Table 4.4 (63% are regular drinkers). In general, regular drinking seems to be consistently high when both mothers and fathers drank at least once a week, although it is also high when both parents drank less than once a week.

Our earlier findings would lead us to expect that regular drinking would be lowest amongst daughters whose parents were both non-drinkers. Although the proportion of regular drinkers is indeed relatively low when both parents were non-drinkers, we in fact find the lowest proportion of regular drinkers amongst daughters whose mothers did not drink and whose fathers drank four or more times a week. It thus seems that where fathers drink very frequently and mothers do not drink, the proportion of regular drinkers amongst daughters is lowest (29%).

In general it seems that the probability of sons becoming regular drinkers increases roughly in proportion to the overall acceptance of and indulgence in drinking by both parents. Daughters, on the other hand, tend to emulate their mothers' drinking habits, particularly where these present a marked contrast with those of their fathers' drinking habits.

4.7 Mean alcoholic consumption by fathers' frequency of drinking

In the next three sections we shall be looking at the influence of parental drinking behaviour on the actual amount drunk by regular drinkers. Therefore in Table 4.5 we have presented the mean number of alcoholic units drunk per week by male and female regular drinkers for the various categories of fathers' frequency of drinking.

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[1] *We have deliberately excluded those cases where their father and/or mother was deceased or nothing was known about their drinking habits, partly because their numbers become too small when subdivided, and partly because our aim is to identify trends rather than to describe special categories.*

Table 4.4 The distribution of regular drinkers by sex and mothers' and fathers' drinking habits

Father drank:	Men Mother drank: At least once a week		Less than once a week		Did not drink		All mothers††		Women Mother drank: At least once a week		Less than once a week		Did not drink		All mothers††	
	%	*Base*	%	*Base*	%	*Base*	%	*Base*	%	*Base*	%	*Base*	%	*Base*	%	*Base*
Four or more times a week	88	*33.0*	84	*57.0*	73	*101.0*	79	*198.0*	61	*37.5*	42	*45.3*	29	*85.4*	40	*172.7*
Two or three times a week	88	*49.0*	88	*80.0*	78	*156.0*	82	*288.0*	63	*61.3*	56	*54.4*	53	*141.4*	56	*259.4*
About once a week	93	*55.3*	82	*99.3*	70	*192.0*	77	*350.6*	61	*48.4*	57	*128.4*	38	*282.4*	45	*466.5*
Less than once a week	*	*2.0*	74	*199.3*	63	*144.0*	69	*350.6*	*	*6.8*	63	*224.4*	38	*157.4*	53	*402.3*
Father did not drink	*	*6.0*	*	*11.0*	63	*323.0*	63	*343.3*	*	*2.3*	*	*21.5*	34	*448.6*	33	*479.2*
All fathers†	87	*160.6*	80	*464.3*	68	*944.3*	74	*1618.1*	63	*169.2*	60	*503.7*	38	*1145.6*	46	*1886.9*

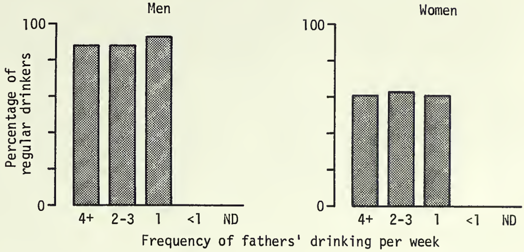
† *Includes cases where the father was deceased or little was known about the father and where the question was not answered*

†† *Includes the above cases for the mother*

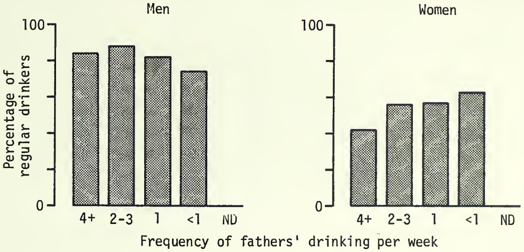
* *Base is too small for percentaging - actual figures are given in italics*

Fig 4(b) Distribution of regular drinkers by sex and mothers' and fathers' drinking habits

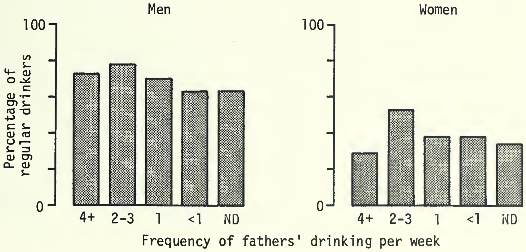
Mother drank at least once a week



Mother drank less than once a week



Mother did not drink



In Table 4.5 it can be seen that amongst male regular drinkers the mean amount consumed increases with fathers' frequency of drinking. It is clear that where fathers drank less than once a week or not at all their sons consume considerably less than average, where fathers drank about once a week their sons drink about average and, lastly, where fathers drank twice or more often per week their sons drink considerably more than average.

Table 4.5

Regular Drinkers - Mean number of alcoholic units drunk per week by father's drinking habits

	Male regular drinkers		Female regular drinkers	
Father drank:	Mean number of alcoholic units per week	*Base*	Mean number of alcoholic units per week	*Base*
Four or more times per week	25.0	*156.0*	5.8	*69.4*
Two or three times per week	25.5	*237.0*	6.0	*146.6*
About once a week	20.6	*269.6*	4.1	*211.5*
Less than once a week	16.8	*243.0*	3.7	*213.0*
Father did not drink	15.8	*216.3*	4.8	*159.3*
Nothing known about father's drinking	*	*23.0*	*	*22.8*
Father deceased	24.0	*36.3*	11.5	*29.6*
Not answered	*	*10.9*	*	*9.2*
Total	20.5	*1192.1*	4.8	*861.4*

* *Base is too small to obtain a reliable mean*

Amongst female drinkers there appears to be a 'U' shaped relationship, ie a slight increase in fathers' frequency of drinking produces a drop in the mean amount drunk but a further increase in fathers' frequency of drinking creates a dramatic rise in the mean amount drunk. Thus, male and female regular drinkers with fathers who drank twice or more often per week tend to consume the largest quantities of alcohol.

4.8 Mean alcoholic consumption by mothers' frequency of drinking

The influence of mothers' frequency of drinking on the mean amount drunk by regular drinkers is shown in Table 4.6

Looking at the left hand column which gives the mean number of alcoholic units drunk by male regular drinkers it is clear that as mothers' frequency of drinking increases so does the mean amount drunk by informants. All those with drinking mothers have a mean level of drinking above the overall mean and those with mothers who drank twice or more per week have an outstandingly high mean. (At 25.9 alcoholic units per week it is higher than the mean for any of the categories of fathers' frequency of drinking. However, the base is rather small and the result is not very reliable.)
Similarly, amongst female regular drinkers, those whose mothers drank twice or more often per week have the highest mean level of drinking. In general the influence of mothers'

drinking is the same as for male regular drinkers, with increased frequency of mothers' drinking being associated with a rise in the mean amount drunk by female regular drinkers. There is a difference in degree, however, between the trends shown in the two columns and that is demonstrated by the fact that an above average amount of alcohol is consumed by female regular drinkers whose mothers drank at least once a week whereas for male regular drinkers an above average level is reached by those whose mothers drank at all.

Table 4.6

Regular Drinkers - Mean number of alcoholic units drunk per week by mother's drinking habits

	Male regular drinkers		Female regular drinkers	
Mother drank:	Mean number of alcoholic units per week	*Base*	Mean number of alcoholic units per week	*Base*
Twice or more per week	25.9	*40.0*	7.1	*48.9*
About once a week	22.2	*99.6*	6.0	*58.0*
Less than once a week	22.1	*372.3*	4.6	*286.4*
Mother did not drink	19.1	*646.3*	4.6	*436.2*
Nothing known about mother's drinking	*	*19.0*	*	*16.0*
Mother deceased	*	*12.0*	*	*11.4*
Not answered	*	*2.9*	*	*4.6*
Total	20.5	*1192.1*	4.8	*861.4*

* *Base is too small to obtain a reliable mean*

4.9 Meal alcoholic consumption by both mothers' and fathers' frequency of drinking

Having established the relationship between each parent's drinking behaviour and the mean amount drunk by regular drinkers it seemed useful to see if the same trends were operating when the joint effect of both parents' drinking were taken into account.

In Table 4.7 and Fig 4(c) we have presented the mean amount drunk by male and female regular drinkers for each combination of mothers' and fathers' drinking behaviour.

From the preceding analyses we would expect to find the highest level of drinking amongst male regular drinkers whose fathers drank two or three times a week and whose mothers drank at least once a week. In fact, the table shows that a relatively high amount is consumed by all those whose fathers drank at least once a week whatever their mothers' frequency of drinking (except where their fathers drank about once a week and their mothers did not drink).

At the other extreme, the lowest amounts are consumed by male regular drinkers whose mothers did not drink and whose fathers drank less than once a week or not at all (mean amounts = 14.0 and 15.8 alocholic units respectively).

Turning now to the influence of both parents' drinking behaviour on the mean amounts consumed by female regular drinkers we find that the highest mean amount is consumed by those daughters whose mothers and fathers drank most frequently. (This is consistent

Table 4.7 Regular Drinkers - The distribution of the mean amount drunk by sex and mothers' and fathers' frequency of drinking

	Men								Women							
	Mother drank:								Mother drank:							
Father drank:	At least once a week		Less than once a week		Did not drink		All†† mothers		At least once a week		Less than once a week		Did not drink		All mothers	
	Mean	*Base*	Mean	*Base*	Mean	*Base*	Mean	*Base*	Mean	*Base*	Mean	*Base*	Mean	*Base*	Mean	*Base*
Four or more times a week	23.3	*29.0*	24.8	*48.0*	26.2	*74.0*	23.0	*156.0*	8.5	*22.8*	6.7	*19.2*	2.9	*25.1*	5.8	*69.4*
Two or three times a week	25.6	*43.0*	25.2	*70.0*	25.9	*122.0*	25.5	*237.0*	5.6	*38.5*	7.3	*30.6*	5.7	*75.2*	6.0	*146.4*
About once a week	22.6	*51.3*	25.4	*81.3*	17.0	*134.0*	20.6	*269.6*	4.5	*29.6*	4.6	*72.7*	3.5	*106.9*	4.1	*211.5*
Less than once a week	*	*2.0*	18.8	*147.0*	14.0	*91.0*	16.8	*243.0*	*	*4.6*	3.4	*142.4*	4.5	*59.3*	3.7	*213.0*
Father did not drink	*	*6.0*	*	*9.0*	15.8	*203.3*	15.8	*216.3*	*	*2.3*	*	*3.3*	4.9	*153.8*	4.8	*159.3*
All fathers†	23.3	*139.6*	22.1	*372.3*	19.1	*646.3*	20.5	*1192.1*	6.5	*106.9*	4.6	*286.4*	4.6	*436.2*	4.8	*861.4*

† *Includes cases where the father was deceased or little was known about the father and where the question was not answered*

†† *Includes the above cases for the mother*

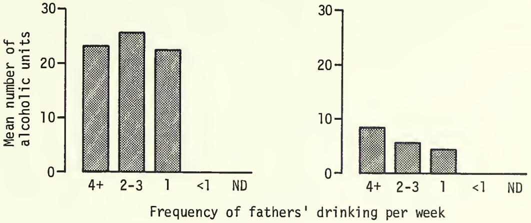
* *Base is too small for percentaging - actual figures are given in italics*

Fig 4(c) Regular drinkers: Distribution of the mean amount drunk by sex and mothers' and fathers' drinking habits

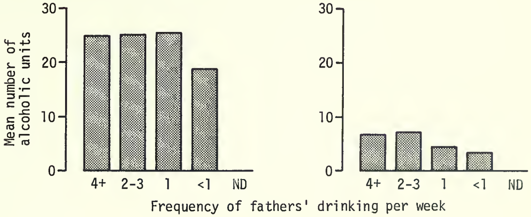
Male regular drinkers

Female regular drinkers

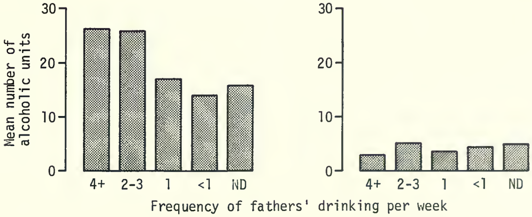
Mother drank at least once a week



Mother drank less than once a week



Mother did not drink



with the results for each parent's drinking behaviour.) The lowest mean amount, however, is consumed by daughters whose mothers did not drink and whose fathers drank four or more times a week. This is consistent with our results on the prevalence of regular drinking amongst women where we found the lowest proportion amongst those whose fathers drank very frequently and mothers did not drink (see section 4.6). We have further evidence, therefore, that when fathers drink very frequently but mothers do not drink daughters will tend to follow their mothers' but sons their fathers' example.

4.10 Whether or not informants were 'bothered' by their parents' drinking behaviour

We thought it was quite likely that some informants might react to frequent parental drinking by moderating their own drinking behaviour. Therefore, we asked all informants who had a mother and/or father who drank at least once a week whether or not they were 'bothered' by their parents' drinking [Q.22 (b)].

11% of all informants (22% of those with fathers who drank at least once a week) stated that they were bothered by their fathers' drinking. On the other hand, only 1% of all informants (10% of those with mothers who drank at least once a week) were bothered by their mothers' drinking. This contrast is not very surprising in view of the fact that so few mothers drank at least once a week. It seems that women are more likely than men to be bothered by their fathers' drinking (12% compared with 9%). (It is not possible to analyse those bothered by their mothers' drinking by sex as the numbers are too small.)

In particular we were interested in the effect on informants' own drinking if they were bothered by their parents' drinking. However, an analysis of the distribution of drinking behaviour according to whether or not informants were bothered by their fathers' drinking showed that there were no significant differences between the two groups of informants.

4.11 Reasons given by informants for parental abstinence

In section 4.2 we noted the sharp rise in the number of families where mothers drank over the last four generations of parents. Amongst the parents of our informants, however, it was the norm apart from the last generation for mothers to abstain from drinking. Moreover, even amongst this last generation (parents of informants aged 17-30) there was a fairly high proportion of families where neither parent drank (18%). Because abstinence was fairly common amongst the parents of our informants we thought it would be useful to examine the reasons given by our informants for their parents abstinence.

Therefore, in Table 4.8 we have presented the reasons separately for mothers' and fathers' abstinence since we thought that different reasons might be applicable to each parent. It is clear that the most common reason given by informants for their parents' abstinence, whether it applies to their mother or their father, were financial reasons, "couldn't afford it" being the most usual verbatim answer given. On the other hand, there are two reasons which occur far more frequently for mothers than for fathers. Firstly, just over 15% of informants thought that their mothers did not drink as it was not the "done thing" for them to drink, compared with only just over 3% for fathers. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, just over 5% of informants thought that their mothers did not drink because of the bad effect of their spouses' drinking - there were no such cases reported as reasons for fathers' abstinence. On the other hand, it seems that informants are more likely to think that their fathers did not drink because of the bad effect of drinking they had noted on their own parents (ie informants' grandparents). The distribution of all the other reasons given by informants is fairly similar for both parents except that there is a slight tendency for fathers' abstinence to be more associated with religious reasons.

Table 4.8

Reasons given by informant for mother and/or father not drinking

Reasons for not drinking	Father	Mother
	%	%
Could not afford it	20	17
Preferred to spend money on other things	4	4
No time, too busy	3	5
Bad effect of drinking on parents/relatives	9	4
Bad effect of drinking on spouse	-	5
Bad effect of drinking on others	3	3
Religious reasons	15	10
Did not approve of drink	11	12
Brought up not to drink	13	12
Not 'done thing' to drink (For mothers= not 'done thing' for women to drink)	3	15
Followed spouse's example of not drinking	1	2
Bad effect on health	4	2
Did not like taste/smell	5	10
No desire to drink†	10	10
No particular reason, vague†	15	13
Others	6	5
Not answered	1	1
Total reasons	100$^{\phi}$	100$^{\phi}$
Base	*828.1*	*2094.5*

ϕ *Percentages do not sum to 100 since informants may give more than one answer*
† *Only coded if no other answer given.*

4.12 Summary

1 Changes in parental drinking habits over time

When the parental drinking habits reported by informants aged 17-30, 31-50, and 51 and over are compared, it is found that a very large rise has occurred over time in the proportion of mothers who drank (from 24% to 59%). On the other hand, there has only been a slight increase in the proportion of fathers who drank (from 68% to 77%). Over the same period of time the proportion of families where neither parent drank has decreased from 26% for the 51 and over age group to 18% for the 17-30 age group. Amongst our current generation of parents we find the exceptionally high proportion of 91% of mothers who drink and this can be compared with 92% of fathers. Thus, it has now become the norm in families with young children that both parents drink.

2 Effects of parental drinking on informants' drinking habits

The more frequently their fathers drank (up to the level of two or three times a week) and the more frequently their mothers drank the higher the prevalence of regular drinking amongst sons. Thus the proportion of male regular drinkers is highest where both parents drank at least once a week (approximately 90%) and lowest where neither parent drank (63%).

Similarly, the more frequently their mothers drank, the more likely are daughters to be regular drinkers. There is no association, however, between fathers' frequency of drinking and regular drinking amongst daughters. In fact, we find that regular drinking is highest amongst daughters where both parents drank at least once a week (63%) and lowest where their mother did not drink and their father drank four or more times a week (29%). It is interesting that there are fewer regular drinkers in this latter category than amongst those daughters whose parents were both non-drinkers (34%). This finding is not paralleled in the case of men, where the proportion of regular drinkers amongst those with mothers who were non-drinkers and fathers who drank four or more times a week is approximately the same as the overall average (73%). It seems, therefore, that where fathers drink very frequently but mothers do not drink at all daughters will tend to follow their mothers', but sons their fathers' behaviour.

Moving on to the effect of parental drinking upon the actual amount of alcohol consumed by regular drinkers, we find that for both sexes this amount increases directly according to their mothers' frequency of drinking. As fathers' frequency of drinking increases we find that sons tend to consume greater amounts of alcohol but a consistent trend in this direction is not found amongst daughters (although the greatest quantities are drunk by those daughters whose fathers drank at least twice a day).

If we take into account the joint effect of both parents' drinking we find that for men the main factor is having a father who drank at least once a week irrespective of their mother's drinking behaviour. On the other hand, female regular drinkers are likely to drink the greatest amount if both of their parents drank relatively frequently (ie fathers drank four or more times a week and mothers drank at least once a week). It is interesting to note that the lowest amount is drunk by female regular drinkers whose fathers drank four or more times a week and whose mothers did not drink. This tends to support our earlier finding that daughters will tend to use their mother as a model if their mother did not drink but their father drank very frequently while sons will tend to follow their fathers' behaviour.

5 Origin and development of drinking behaviour

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the commencement of drinking behaviour and its development up to the stage when it becomes a normal part of an individual's behaviour.

It proved very difficult to pinpoint the time when people first tasted alcohol and so we simply asked our informants to describe the first occasion on which they could remember tasting an alcoholic drink. An even harder task was to try to establish a consistently understood definition of the point at which drinking became a normal part of a person's behaviour. The terms "regular drinking" and "drinking as a normal habit" were tried out in pilot work but it was found that they were often interpreted to mean frequent, or substantial, drinking, with the result that an unduly high proportion of drinkers denied having reached this stage. At the main stage of the survey we decided to refer to the time when informants "started drinking as opposed to just trying out drinks to see what they were like" (Q.19).

We have, therefore, a history of the development of drinking behaviour for each informant or, if this does not apply, an exposition of the reasons why they have never tasted an alcoholic drink or never really started to drink as a normal habit.

In the final part of this chapter we shall be looking at changes in drinking behaviour. Naturally this is a very complex area and one in which we have to rely on questions dependent on memory which are known to be subject to error. We restricted ourselves, therefore, to asking our informants whether they were drinking more, less, or about the same amount as ten years ago (Q.21). In addition, we have compared this with our informants' opinions on whether there are more, less or about the same number of people drinking in Scotland today compared with 10 years ago (Q.1).

5.2 Stages in the development of drinking behaviour

We have defined the first stage in the development of individuals' drinking behaviour as the time when they tasted their first drink. By asking informants to give details of the very first drink they could remember tasting we hope to have avoided replies that refer to occasions when they were told they had been given alcohol, eg. the teaspoon of brandy given to them when they were ill as a baby, and so obtain more reliable and more meaningful information. We recognised that there was likely to be considerable memory bias in recalling this time but we still felt it was useful as a baseline from which drinking developed to a lesser or greater degree.

The second stage in the development of drinking behaviour is defined as the time when informants started drinking as normal behaviour. In phrasing this question (Q.19) as the time "when you started drinking as opposed to just trying out drinks to see what they were like" we may have erred on the side of being over-inclusive but we felt that this was better than using a term such as normal drinking which would have resulted in a sizeable group of drinkers being omitted (see previous section).

We therefore have three categories of people who reach differing stages in the development of drinking behaviour, namely

(i) Those who have never tasted an alcoholic drink

(ii) Those who have tasted an alcoholic drink but who have never started drinking as normal behaviour

It is useful to compare this classification of our informants into three groups with our usual classification of drinking behaviour which is shown in Table 5.1.

It is clear from this table that there is a very close relationship between the two ways of classifying drinking behaviour. Over 90% of male and female regular drinkers say that they have started drinking as normal behaviour and the majority of male and female occasional drinkers also claim to have reached this stage. At the other extreme, the great majority of current non-drinkers say that they have never started to drink as normal behaviour and, moreover, a third of male non-drinkers and nearly a half of female non-drinkers say that they have never even tasted an alcoholic drink. Overall, only 2% of men and 6% of women have never tasted an alcoholic drink.

It is interesting to note that, whether classified as regular, occasional or non-drinkers, women are in each case less inclined than men to say that they have started drinking as a normal habit. (Overall, 88% of men compared with 68% of women had started drinking as normal behaviour.)

5.3 Analysis of data relating to the first drink

We decided that the most useful way to carry out this analysis was to take as our central variable the age at which the first drink was consumed and to see to what extent this varies with such things as age at the time of interview and current drinking behaviour (Sections 5.3 - 5.5). We were also interested in the more social aspects of the first drink and so in Sections 5.6 - 5.8 we look at the company with whom informants took their first drink and the types of alcoholic beverage consumed, plus their reported reactions to their first taste of alcohol.

We were aware, of course, that this information relating to the first drink might not be very reliable for it is difficult for people accurately to recall events that took place in their childhood or early youth. However, since the vast majority of informants (over 95%) could remember a lot of detail about their first drink, and since it is a very useful starting point for this discussion of the origin of drinking behaviour, it seemed worthwhile to present this information.

5.4 Age at first drink by age at the time of interview

The actual distribution of the age at first drink by sex and age at the time of interview is given in Table 5.2; the final row of the table represents the mean age at the first drink for each of the three current age groups.

It is clear from this table that only 2% of men and 5% of women could not remember any first drink at all, and 1% of women and even fewer men, given that they were able to recall their first drink, could not remember their age at that time.

The mean ages at first drink for different age groups of informants summarise the table very well for they succinctly demonstrate two main findings. Firstly, men tend to have their first drink at a much younger age than women (18.2 compared with 21.8 mean years of age). Secondly, successive generations of informants have tended to have their first drink at an earlier age than their predecessors. Moreover, there seems to be a greater drop in the mean age at first drink between those who are now over 50 years of age and those who are aged 31-50 than between the latter group and the youngest group. Thus it seems that although the mean age at first drink has been steadily reducing over time the rate of decrease has reduced with the last generation. (Since the differences between the three age groups are both systematic and very large, it seems most unlikely that they could be entirely accounted for by differential memory bias in recall.)

Table 5.1 The stage in the development of drinking behaviour reached by non-drinkers, occasional drinkers and regular drinkers

Stage reached in the development of drinking behaviour	Men				Women			
	Non drinkers	Occa-sional drinkers	Regular drinkers	Total	Non drinkers	Occa-sional drinkers	Regular drinkers	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Never tasted an alcoholic drink	34	-	-	2	47	-	-	6
Tasted alcohol but never started drinking as normal behaviour	45	25	3	10	47	37	9	26
Started drinking as normal behaviour	21	75	97	88	6	63	91	68
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*77.0*	*349.0*	*1192.1*	*1618.1*	*235.5*	*790.0*	*861.4*	*1886.9*

Table 5.2 The distribution of the age at first drink by sex and age at time of interview

Age at first drink	Men				Women			
	17 - 30 years	31 - 50 years	51 years and over	All age groups	17 - 30 years	31 - 50 years	51 years and over	All age groups
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Up to 12	16	6	3	7	7	2	1	3
13 - 15	29	11	4	13	18	8	2	8
16	18	12	7	12	23	6	2	9
17	20	14	7	13	19	9	3	9
18	8	24	16	17	18	16	6	12
19 - 21	6	23	26	20	12	26	16	18
22 - 25	-	7	15	8	1	15	16	12
26 - 30	-	1	8	4	-	8	12	8
31+	-	1	7	3	-	4	20	10
Can't remember age at first drink	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1
Can't remember any first time	1	1	3	2	2	3	9	5
Never tasted an alcoholic drink	-	-	4	2	1	1	12	6
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*436.1*	*598.0*	*584.0*	*1618.1*	*493.9*	*606.4*	*782.0*	*1886.9*
Mean age @ first drink	15.1	17.7	21.3	18.2	16.4	20.4	27.5	21.8

5.5 Mean age at first drink by current drinking behaviour

It seemed highly probable that the age at which the first drink was taken would be related to informants' current drinking behaviour so that in Table 5.3 we have presented the mean age at first drink for non-drinkers, occasional drinkers and six categories of regular drinkers according to the number of alcoholic units drunk per week (four categories for women).

If we first compare non-drinkers, occasional drinkers and regular drinkers it is evident that the mean age at first drink is lower for those male and female informants who are currently more involved with drinking. Moving on to regular drinkers, there is a clear trend which shows that the higher the amount of alcohol currently consumed the lower is the mean age at first drink. (For men the range is from 15.7 years to 19.9 years and for women from 17.7 years to 21.9 years.)

Table 5.3

The distribution of mean age at first drink by sex and current drinking behaviour

	Men		Women	
No. of alcoholic units per week	Mean age at first drink	*Base†*	Mean age at first drink	*Base†*
51+	15.7	*105.3*		
21 - 50	17.0	*296.3*	17.7	*80.8*
11 - 20	17.4	*253.3*		
6 - 10	17.6	*236.0*	19.1	*156.7*
3 - 5	18.4	*155.0*	19.9	*247.9*
1 - 2	19.9	*129.3*	21.9	*339.5*
All regular drinkers	17.6	*1175.1*	20.4	*824.9*
Occasional drinkers	19.9	*339.0*	22.5	*714.7*
Non-drinkers	21.5	*48.0*	27.8	*121.6*
All who have ever tasted alcohol	18.2	*1562.1*	21.8	*1661.2*

† *Base comprises all those who have tasted alcohol and were able to give an age for their first drink*

Further analysis showed that the effects of age at the time of interview and current drinking behaviour were both independent and consistent. Thus, the youngest mean age at first drink was found amongst those male and female regular drinkers now aged 17-30, while the oldest mean age at first drink was found amongst those male and female non-drinkers now aged 51 or over.

5.6 Types of company with whom the first drink was taken

In Tables 5.4A and B we have presented the distribution of the different types of company with whom the first drink was taken by the age at which it was taken for men and women respectively. In interpreting these tables it should be noted that informants gave details of *all* the company present so that the specific categories are not mutually exclusive.

If we first look at Table 5.4A we can see that overall nearly four-fifths of men, who could remember their first drink, took it in the company of male friends, a quarter in the company of relatives, and just over a tenth in the company of female friends. On closer examination of the different ages at which the first drink was taken, it can be seen that relatives are the type of company most frequently mentioned by those who had their first drink at 12 years of age or under but they are not the main source of company for those who had their first drink at a later age. For these older groups it seems that male friends are the type of company most frequently mentioned. Finally, it is interesting to note that the highest proportion of those who had their first drink on their own is found amongst those up to 12 years of age at that time (11%) - probably a secret swig from one of the bottles kept by their parents at home.

Turning to Table 5.4B we can compare the overall findings for men with those pertaining to women. It is clear that the distribution of the types of company with whom the first drink was taken is quite different. Whilst female friends represent the most frequent type of company mentioned (approximately three-fifths of all women who could remember their first drink gave this answer), two-fifths mentioned relatives and another two-fifths mentioned male friends. A further one-fifth gave their spouse, and lastly one-tenth gave their boyfriend or fiancé as being amongst the company with whom they had their first drink.

If we compare the types of company mentioned by those who took their first drink at different ages it is clear that, as with men, the youngest age group gave relatives as the main source of company - although for women this extends to those aged 15 at the time of their first drink. At the age of 16 and over female friends seem to predominate as the source of company with whom the first drink was taken until the age of 26 is reached when spouses became the main type of company cited. The fact should not be overlooked, however, that male friends feature fairly prominently from age 13 onwards.

To sum up, it seems that men are most likely to have had their first drink in the company of male friends while women usually have their first drink in the company of female friends, although male friends and relatives are also frequently mentioned by the latter.

5.7 Types of beverage consumed at first drink

In Table 5.5 we have given the distribution of the various beverages taken for the first drink by men and women. It is immediately clear that the beverages which are most popular for the first drink differ between men and women. Thus 58% of men drank beer for their first drink compared with only 5% of women, while 42% of women drank sherry for their first drink compared with only 8% of men. A further, very noticeable, difference is that 22% of women drank gin, rum or vodka for their first drink compared with only 5% of men. However, approximately a tenth of both men and women drank whisky for their first drink.

Table 5.4A Men - Distribution of the type of company with whom the first drink was taken by age at first drink

Company with whom first drink was taken	Age at first drink										
	Up to 12	13 - 15	16	17	18	19 - 21	22 - 25	26 - 30	31 and over	Don't know	All who have ever tasted alcohol
Relatives	73	36	20	15	15	16	22	34	23	*3.0*	25
Male friends	28	73	89	90	90	84	78	67	75	*3.0*	79
Female friends	15	10	13	12	6	10	12	10	18	*1.0*	11
Spouse	-	-	-	-	-	1	6	7	14	-	1
Girlfriend/ fiancée	-	-	1	2	2	2	1	2	-	-	1
On own	11	2	2	1	1	2	5	7	2	*1.0*	3
Can't remember company	-	-	1	-	-	1	1	3	-	-	-
Not answered	3	-	-	1	1	1	1	-	7	-	1
All who have ever tasted alcohol	100$^{\phi}$	100$^{\phi}$	100$^{\phi}$	100$^{\phi}$	100$^{\phi}$	100$^{\phi}$	100$^{\phi}$	100$^{\phi}$	100$^{\phi}$	*	100$^{\phi}$
Base	*119.0*	*216.6*	*190.0*	*216.6*	*271.0*	*317.0*	*130.0*	*58.0*	*44.0*	*6.0*	*1568.1*

ϕ Percentages do not sum to 100 as informants may give more than one answer
** Base is too small for percentaging - actual figures given in italics*

Table 5.4B Women - Distribution of the type of company with whom the first drink was taken by age at first drink

Company with whom first drink was taken	Age of first drink										
	Up to 12	13 - 15	16	17	18	19 - 21	22 - 25	26 - 30	31 and over	Don't know	All who have ever tasted alcohol
Relatives	82	74	40	42	39	41	38	45	42	*9.1*	45
Male friends	6	34	49	30	47	44	48	52	51	*2.3*	44
Female friends	15	44	74	64	62	61	57	58	65	*4.6*	59
Spouse	-	-	-	3	5	15	45	63	63	-	22
Boyfriend/ fiancé	4	3	7	20	15	23	11	3	-	-	12
On own	4	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Can't remember company	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	1	-	1
Not answered	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	*4.6*	-
Total	100^{ϕ}	100^{ϕ}	100^{ϕ}	100^{ϕ}	100^{ϕ}	100^{ϕ}	100^{ϕ}	100^{ϕ}	100^{ϕ}	*	100^{ϕ}
Base	*51.9*	*150.9*	*163.6*	*172.4*	*232.3*	*336.2*	*221.2*	*148.2*	*180.1*	*18.3*	*1675.1*

ϕ *Percentages do not sum to 100 as informants may give more than one answer*
* *Base is too small for percentaging - actual figures given in italics*

Table 5.5

The distribution of the type of beverage consumed at the first drink by sex

Alcoholic beverage consumed at first drink	Men	Women
	%	%
Whisky	11	9
Gin, rum, vodka	5	22
Beer (or stout)	58	5
Lager	5	3
Sherry (or port)	8	42
Wine	4	6
Cider	2	2
Beer (or stout) with spirits	3	-
Other beverages	2	2
Can't remember/not answered	3	8
All who have tasted an alcoholic drink	100	100
Base	*1568.1*	*1674.9*

5.8 Whether or not informants enjoyed the taste of their first drink

All those who could remember the type of beverage taken for the first drink were asked whether or not they had enjoyed its taste [Q.18(c)]. In fact, the majority of both men and women did not enjoy the taste of their first drink (59% of men, 58% of women). Since most men and women do start drinking as a normal habit it is worth emphasizing the rather obvious point that alcohol is an acquired taste and that many people drink for other reasons than those relating to the actual enjoyment of its taste. (We shall be discussing this in detail in Chapter 8.) It is rather ironic, perhaps, that whisky, the beverage for which Scotland is renowned, seems to produce the highest initial dislike to its actual taste (73% of those men and women who had whisky for their first drink disliked its taste).

5.9 Reasons for never having tasted an alcoholic drink

In concluding this description of the details of the first drink it is worth briefly noting the reasons given by the small minority of total abstainers for never having tasted an alcoholic drink. We should remember that these abstainers mainly comprise women over 51 years of age (see Section 5.2) and although we have separated our answers by sex in Table 5.6 there are insufficient numbers of men who have never tasted alcohol to justify percentaging out of this group.

Table 5.6

The reasons given by men and women for never having tasted an alcoholic drink

Reasons	Men	Women
	No.	%
Saw bad effect on family	*6.0*	12
Saw bad effect on others	*7.0*	8
Brought up not to drink	*5.0*	37
Associated with others who didn't drink	*1.0*	-
Couldn't afford to drink	*2.0*	-
Waste of money	*3.0*	6
Religious reasons	*3.0*	10
Preferred other interests/activities	-	2
Dislike taste/smell	*1.0*	8
Unacceptable for women to drink	-	2
Disapprove of drinking	-	19
No desire to drink†	*5.0*	19
Can't remember/not answered	*1.0*	-
Other reasons	*4.0*	-
Total	*	100ᶲ
Base	*26.0*	*110.4*

** Base is too small for percentaging - actual figures are given in italics.*
ϕ Percentages do not sum to 100 as informants could give more than one answer
† Only coded if no other answer given.

The main reason given by women for never having tasted an alcoholic drink is that they came from families where they were 'brought up not to drink'. Nearly a fifth of these women maintained that they disapproved of drinking while the same proportion stated that they had no desire to drink. The other reasons mentioned fairly frequently were that they had never tasted alcohol because they had seen its bad effect on their family or on other people and that they abstained for religious reasons.

Although it is not possible to give a reliable analysis of the reasons given by men for totally abstaining from drinking it is clear that the distribution of their reasons is very similar to that for women.

5.10 Analysis of data relating to the start of drinking as normal behaviour

The time when informants consider that they started drinking as a normal habit marks a much more significant step in the development of drinking behaviour than does the time of their first drink. This is because we are attempting to identify a time when drinking became a normal and acceptable form of social behaviour for our informants, as opposed to a novel or experimental form of behaviour.

Our analysis of the start of drinking as normal behaviour will follow the same general pattern as that for the first drink. Thus, we shall be seeing how the age at which drinking became normal behaviour is related to such things as age at the time of interview and current drinking behaviour, and we shall be noting the company with whom drinks were usually taken at that time. We also thought it would be interesting to find out why our informants had or had not started drinking as normal behaviour at a particular stage in their lives.

5.11 Age at the start of drinking as normal behaviour by age at the time of interview

In Table 5.7 we have given the proportions of male and female informants who start drinking as normal behaviour from age 16 onwards for the three age groups previously defined.

Two main trends are shown up in this table. Firstly, the age at which drinking is started as normal behaviour seems to increase as age at the time of interview increases, ie older informants tend to have started drinking at a later age than younger informants. Secondly, men tend to start drinking as normal behaviour at an earlier age than women. It is probable that the figures relating to those aged 17-30 at the time of interview are underestimates because, while some members of this group had not started drinking as normal behaviour, it is quite likely that they (particularly the younger ones) might do so at some stage in the near future. However, the extent of underestimation is necessarily slight, since 95% of men and 85% of women aged 17-30 did, in fact, report that they had started drinking as normal behaviour at the time of interview. (The underestimation in the older groups is likely to be negligible since it is a fair assumption that those over 30 years of age, if they have not done so by this age, are unlikely to start drinking as normal behaviour in the future.)

The legal minimum age for drinking in a public house or club has been 18 since the beginning of this century and it is interesting to note the proportions of informants who started drinking as normal behaviour 'under age', ie at age 17 or younger. Overall, 16% of men and 7% of women started drinking as normal behaviour under the legal age for drinking on licensed premises. However, drinking as a normal habit under the age of 18 was much more common amongst our younger rather than older informants. Thus, amongst men, 40% of those now aged between 17 and 30 started drinking as normal behaviour under the age of 18 compared with 11% of those aged 31-50, and only 8% of those aged 51 and over. Similarly, amongst women, the 17-30 age group has an outstandingly high proportion who started drinking as normal behaviour under 18 years of age (25%).

Table 5.7 Age at start of drinking as normal behaviour by sex and age at time of interview

Age at start of drinking as normal behaviour	Men				Women			
	17 - 30 years	31 - 50 years	51 years and over	All age groups	17 - 30 years	31 - 50 years	51 years and over	All age groups
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Up to 16	21	3	6	7	8	-	-	2
17	19	7	2	9	17	1	-	5
18	32	18	8	18	25	8	1	9
19	10	13	5	9	15	4	1	6
20	7	12	10	10	9	8	3	6
21	3	11	9	8	3	6	1	3
22 - 25	3	19	18	14	5	22	8	12
26 - 30	1	7	12	7	2	18	8	10
31+	-	3	12	6	-	15	24	15
Don't know/can't remember	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	0
Never really started drinking as normal behaviour	5	6	18	10	15	17	39	26
DNA - Never tasted an alcoholic drink	-	-	4	2	11	1	12	6
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*436.1*	*598.0*	*584.0*	*1618.1*	*493.9*	*606.4*	*782.0*	*1886.9*
Mean age at start of drinking as normal behaviour	18.2	21.0	25.0	21.4	18.9	26.0	34.3	26.1

A convenient way of expressing the differences between the three age groups is to calculate the mean ages of starting to drink as normal behaviour, which are given in the bottom row of Table 5.7. It can be seen that there is a more dramatic decrease in the mean age of starting to drink for women than for men (ie from 34.3 to 18.9 years for women compared with from 25.0 to 18.2 years for men). Thus, there is very little difference in the mean ages of starting to drink between men and women aged 17-30 but there is nearly 10 years difference between men and women over 51 years of age.

It is quite useful to note the difference in years between the age at first drink and the age of starting to drink as normal behaviour which is given in Table 5.8. The figures for the mean age at first drink are slightly different from those given in Section 5.2 since there is a small minority of men and women who have tasted alcohol but who have not started to drink as normal behaviour and who, therefore, have been excluded from these comparative figures. (The effect of this exclusion on the figures is minimal since the number of informants who did not start drinking as normal behaviour is very small.)

By looking at the third column of the table it is clear that the difference in years between the mean age at first drink and starting to drink as normal behaviour varies little between the three age groups of men (between 3 and 4½ years). However, with women the difference in years increases with the current age of informants reaching 8 years for those now aged 51 or over. It is interesting that women aged 17-30 have a shorter time-lapse between their first drink and the start of drinking as normal behaviour than do men aged 17-30 (2.7 years compared with 3.2 years). We should still remember, however, that women aged 17-30 start drinking as normal behaviour at a later age than men.

In conclusion, it is apparent that successive generations have both tasted their first drink and started drinking as normal behaviour at an earlier age than their predecessors. Moreover, the actual time lapse between these two stages in the development of drinking behaviour tends to be shorter for the later generations - particularly amongst women. Over all generations, however, men tend both to have tasted their first drink and to have started drinking as normal behaviour at an earlier age than women.

5.12 Mean age at the start of drinking as normal behaviour by current drinking behaviour

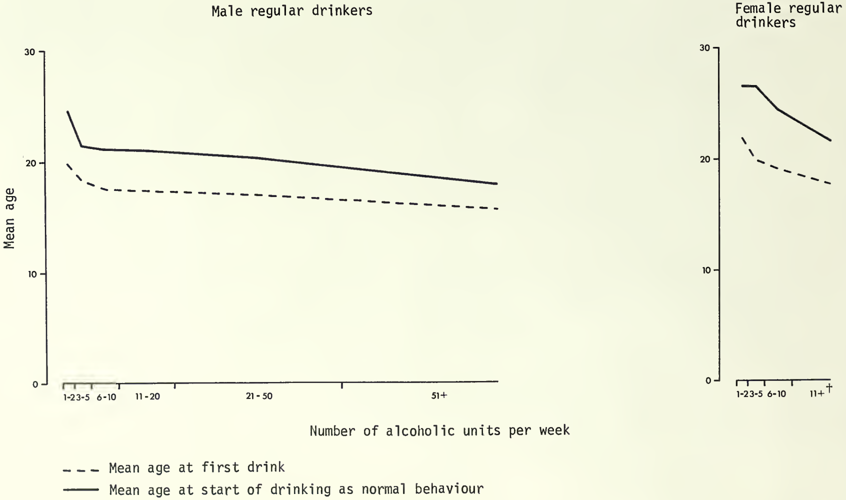
In Section 5.5 we showed that the higher the amount of alcohol currently consumed the earlier the first drink was taken. It can also be demonstrated, by looking at Table 5.9, that this similarly applies to the age at the start of drinking as normal behaviour. Thus, for both men and women, the higher the number of alcoholic units consumed per week the lower the mean age of starting to drink as normal behaviour. In fact, the two highest categories of drinking amongst men and women show a significantly lower age of starting to drink as normal behaviour than all other groups. (Although there are differences between regular drinkers as a whole and occasional drinkers, the main differences are found within the regular drinkers according to the number of alcoholic units consumed per week.)

In Fig 5 we have presented graphs for men and women showing the mean age at first drink and the mean age at the start of drinking as normal behaviour by the number of alcoholic units consumed per week. Only a minute number of regular drinkers considered that they had not started drinking as normal behaviour (see Section 5.2) so we have a valid comparison between the two mean ages without altering the figures. It is clear from the graphs that for both men and women the difference in the mean ages is smallest where the amount drunk per week is highest. Thus, those men and women who currently consume large amounts of alcohol tended to have had their first drink and to have started drinking at relatively young ages, and, furthermore, the time-lapse between these two ages tends to be relatively small. It is also interesting to note that amongst men there is little difference between those who drink 6-10 units up to those who drink 21-50 units, in terms of both their age at first drink and their age at the start of drinking as normal behaviour. However, with women, there is a steady downward trend for both mean ages as the amount drunk increases.

Table 5.8 Comparison between the mean age at first drink and mean age at the start of drinking as normal behaviour by sex and age at the time of interview

	Men				Women			
Age at time of interview	Mean age at first drink	Mean age at start of drinking as normal behaviour	Difference in years	*Base*	Mean age at first drink	Mean age at start of drinking as normal behaviour	Difference in years	*Base*
17-30	15.0	18.2	3.2	*413.8*	16.2	18.9	2.7	*414.4*
31-50	17.6	21.0	3.4	*562.0*	20.2	26.0	5.8	*501.5*
51+	20.6	25.0	4.4	*456.0*	26.3	34.3	8.0	*380.7*
All who started drinking as normal behaviour	17.8	21.4	3.6	*1431.8*	20.6	26.1	5.5	*1299.0*

Fig 5 Regular drinkers: Comparison between the mean age at first drink and the mean age at start of drinking as normal behaviour by sex and current drinking behaviour



† *The mean for females has been plotted at 18 rather than at mid point as this is their highest drinking category*

Table 5.9

The mean age at start of drinking as normal behaviour by sex and current drinking behaviour

	Men		Women	
No. of alcoholic units per week	Mean age at start of drinking as normal behaviour	*Base*	Mean age at start of drinking as normal behaviour	*Base*
51+	17.9	*106.3*		
21-50	20.4	*300.3*	21.6	*80.0*
11-20	21.1	*251.3*		
6-10	21.2	*235.0*	24.4	*159.0*
3-5	21.5	*145.0*	26.5	*257.0*
1-2	24.6	*115.0*	26.6	*287.0*
All regular drinkers	21.0	*1152.8*	25.6	*783.9*
Occasional drinkers	23.4	*263.0*	26.6	*499.5*
Non-drinkers	*	*16.0*	*	*15.7*
All who started drinking as normal behaviour	21.4	*1431.8*	26.1	*1301.8*

** Base is too small to give a reliable mean*

5.13 Types of company with whom informants usually drink by age at the start of drinking as normal behaviour

It seemed quite likely that those people who started to drink as normal behaviour at an early age might choose different company from those who started at a later age. Therefore, in Tables 5.10 A and B we have shown the distribution of the types of company for particular age ranges of starting to drink as normal behaviour, for men and women respectively.

The overwhelming majority of men (92%) started drinking as normal behaviour in the company of male friends. There seems to be little difference in the company chosen according to the age at which the drinking started except that the older groups (ie those who started drinking at age 26 or over) tended to mention spouses and relatives more often than the younger groups. Overall only 2% of men who started to drink as normal behaviour chose to do so on their own.

Amongst women (Table 5.10B) we find that female friends were the most likely source of company with whom they started drinking as normal behaviour (64%). However, both male friends and spouses also feature quite prominently as the type of company chosen. As we might expect, spouses are mainly mentioned by those who started to drink as normal

Table 5.10A Men - Age at start of drinking as normal behaviour by company with whom usually drank at that time

Company with whom usually drank at that time	Age at start of drinking as normal behaviour								
	Up to 16	17	18 - 19	20 - 21	22 - 25	26 - 30	31 and over	Don't know	All who started drinking as normal behaviour
Relatives	8	4	7	7	7	12	20	-	9
Male friends	92	99	95	94	94	92	82	*3.0*	92
Female friends	11	10	10	7	8	10	17	-	10
Spouse	-	1	-	1	1	4	10	-	3
Girlfriend/ fiancée	2	1	4	1	1	2	4	-	2
On own	3	-	1	2	2	3	4	-	1
Not answered	-	1	1	-	-	-	3	*3.0*	-
All who started drinking as normal behaviour	100$^{\phi}$	100$^{\phi}$	100$^{\phi}$	100$^{\phi}$	100$^{\phi}$	100$^{\phi}$	100$^{\phi}$	100$^{\phi}$	100$^{\phi}$
Base	*119.3*	*141.3*	*441.3*	*290.0*	*230.0*	*113.0*	*91.0*	*6.0*	*1431.8*

ϕ *Percentages do not sum to 100 since informants may give more than one answer.*

Table 5.10B Women - Age at start of drinking as normal behaviour by company with whom usually drank at that time

Company with whom usually drank at that time	Age at start of drinking as normal behaviour								
	Up to 16	17	18 - 19	20 - 21	22 - 25	26 - 30	31 and over	Don't know	All who started drinking as normal behaviour
Relatives	21	11	11	14	11	18	20	-	15
Male friends	44	48	47	47	49	60	42	*4.6*	48
Female friends	69	78	70	64	68	62	52	*4.6*	64
Spouse	-	8	12	18	47	72	68	*4.6*	39
Boyfriend/ fiancé	28	23	33	33	14	4	1	-	17
On own	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Not answered	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	*4.6*	1
All who started drinking as normal behaviour	100$^{\phi}$	100$^{\phi}$	100$^{\phi}$	100$^{\phi}$	100$^{\phi}$	100$^{\phi}$	100$^{\phi}$	*	100$^{\phi}$
Base	*44.0*	*88.8*	*285.1*	*176.6*	*223.4*	*184.7*	*282.7*	*11.8*	*1299.0*

ϕ *Percentages do not sum to 100 since informants may give more than one answer.*

behaviour at a relatively late age, while boyfriends and fiancés are mainly mentioned by those who started drinking at a relatively early age. It seems that relatives are likely to be chosen at the extreme ends of the age range, ie under 16 and over 26 at the start of drinking as normal behaviour.

While a very small proportion (2%) of men started to drink as normal behaviour on their own, less than 0.5% of women did this, and they are only found amongst those who start drinking over 30 years of age.

In comparison with the company associated with the first drink it is clear that male friends, in the case of men, and female friends, in the case of women, are even more in evidence at the start of drinking as normal behaviour.

5.14 Reasons for starting to drink as normal behaviour

Table 5.11 shows the proportions of men and women who gave particular reasons why they started to drink as normal behaviour at that time in their life. It can be seen that the overwhelming majority of both men and women considered that they started drinking in order to be sociable or for reasons related to a feeling of social obligation or conformity. Verbatim examples are as follows: *"All my friends were drinking - it was the done thing", "Company I went about with - we went out for a drink", "They always had a drink and we felt we had to as well".*

The next most frequent reason given by both men and women was that they started drinking in connection with some other activity, eg after a game of football, during a dance or other social occasion.

Apart from these two main reasons there were only three other reasons which were mentioned by a sizeable proportion of informants. 17% of men attributed the start of their drinking to being in the Forces while a further 12% considered that they started drinking as normal behaviour because it was the only leisure activity available. Naturally the former reason very rarely applied to women but there was also a considerably smaller proportion of women than men who claimed to have started drinking because it was the only leisure activity available.

On the other hand, the third reason which was fairly frequently given, viz informants started drinking because they enjoyed it at celebrations or special occasions, was more often stated by women than by men. This finding may, of course, be simply a reflection of the fact that there are a greater proportion of occasional drinkers amongst women than amongst men.

Finally, it is interesting to note that, amongst the other reasons given, men are more likely than women to state that they started drinking because they enjoyed the actual taste of alcohol or because they felt they enjoyed or needed the *effects* of alcohol.

5.15 Reasons for never really starting to drink as normal behaviour

In addition to the small proportion (4%) of lifelong abstainers whose views were discussed in Section 5.9, a further 18% (10% of men and 25% of women) said they had tasted alcohol but had never reached the stage which we refer to as drinking as normal behaviour. This group of people were asked the reasons why they had "never really started drinking" (we wished to avoid such phrases as "drinking as normal behaviour" for reasons discussed in Section 5.1). The various reasons given for never really starting to drink have been classified and are presented in Table 5.12.

The most common reason given by men and women was that they actually disliked the taste or smell of alcohol. A further two reasons which were frequently mentioned were, firstly, that they came from families where they were brought up not to drink and, secondly, that informants felt they had no desire or inclination to start drinking. Both of these reasons were more often given by women than by men.

On the other hand, more men than women stated that they had never really started drinking because they considered drinking a waste of money or because they had noticed the bad effects of alcohol on other people. Equal proportions of men and women (8%) never really started drinking because they had seen the bad effects of alcohol on their own families.

Table 5.11

Reasons given by men and women for starting to drink as normal behaviour at that time

Reasons	Men	Women
	%	%
To be sociable, part of the crowd accepted thing to do	73	66
Because informant was in the Forces at that time	17	1
Enjoyed drinking at celebrations/ special occasions	3	14
Began to enjoy actual taste of alcoholic drinks	5	2
Enjoyed/needed the EFFECTS of drink	7	5
Only leisure activity available, a way to pass time	12	6
Drank in connection with another activity, eg. after game of football, at dances and parties	17	22
Enjoyed 'pub' atmosphere	3	3
Could afford to drink at that time	2	2
Wanted to feel grown up/made me feel adult	6	2
Curiosity, novelty†	1	1
Don't know, no particular reason†	3	2
Other reasons	7	7
All who started drinking as normal behaviour	100.0ϕ	100.0ϕ
Base	*1431.8*	*1299.0*

ϕ *Percentages do not sum to 100 as informants may give more than one answer.*
† *Only coded if no other answer given.*

Table 5.12

Reasons given by men and women for never really starting to drink as normal behaviour

Reasons	Men	Women
	%	%
Saw bad effect on family	8	8
Saw bad effect on others	15	12
Brought up not to drink	12	23
Associated with others who didn't drink	4	5
Couldn't afford to drink	9	10
Thought drink a waste of money	19	11
Religious grounds	2	5
Health reasons	6	5
Preferred other interests	7	3
Dislike taste/smell	23	23
Unacceptable for women to drink	-	1
Disapprove of drink	3	5
No desire for it[†]	16	21
Can't remember/not answered	2	2
Other reasons	19	7
All who never really started drinking	100[φ]	100[φ]
Base	*160.3*	*475.2*

[φ] *Percentages do not sum to 100 as informants may give more than one answer.*

[†] *Only coded if no other answer given.*

5.16 Perceptions of changes in drinking habits now compared with 10 years ago

In the last part of this chapter we shall be looking at informants' perceptions of changes both in their own and in the general public's drinking habits now compared with 10 years ago. We shall be noting whether our informants felt they were drinking more, less, or about the same amount of alcohol as 10 years ago and we shall investigate any differences according to sex, age at the time of interview and current drinking behaviour.

At the very beginning of the questionnaire we asked informants whether they considered that more, less or about the same number of people were drinking in Scotland today compared with 10 years ago and it seemed useful to compare their answers with those given for the changes in their own drinking habits.

(i) Perceived changes in informants' own drinking habits

In Table 5.13 we have presented the proportions of male and female informant's age consider that they are drinking more, less, or about the same amount now compared with 10 years ago according to their age at the time of interview. We have also included the category of informants who had not started drinking 10 years ago, who largely consist of those aged 17-30 at the time of interview.

If we firstly concentrate on the table giving mens' changes in drinking habits we find that a far greater proportion of men state that they are drinking less now than state that they are drinking more now (32% compared with 18%). It is interesting how these respective proportions vary according to the informant's age - the younger the informant the more likely he is to state that he is drinking more now rather than less now compared with 10 years ago. It is a fairly plausible assumption that people begin by drinking a little and gradually increase their consumption of alcohol, so that this is not a very surprising result for our young informants. When they are over 30 years of age it seems that informants are more likely to state that they are drinking less now than 10 years ago. This is in general agreement with the trend reported in Sections 2.3 and 3.4 for the rate of alcoholic consumption to reduce after the age of 30.

Turning now to the table for women we find a totally different picture. It seems that most women, who had started drinking 10 years ago, state that they are drinking about the same amount now (35%). Unlike men, the proportion of women who state that they are drinking more now is approximately the same as the proportion who state that they are drinking less now. If we see how age affects these respective proportions it is clear that it is only amongst those women aged 31-50 that the proportion who claim to be drinking more now exceeds the proportion drinking less now. This may perhaps be explained by the fact that women tend to start drinking as normal behaviour at a later age than men (see Section 5.11). Those women over 50 years of age are more likely to consider that they are drinking less now rather than more now, although the majority still think they are drinking about the same amount.

We also looked at the proportions of male and female informants who are drinking more, less, or about the same now as 10 years ago by current drinking behaviour which are shown in Tables 5.14A and B. Regular drinkers have been subdivided according to the number of alcoholic units they consume per week as it was considered that this might be an important factor.

Amongst men it is evident that a much greater proportion of regular than of occasional drinkers claim to be drinking more now. This is balanced by a greater proportion of occasional than regular drinkers stating that they drink about the same amount.

If we examine the differences among male regular drinkers according to the amount they drink, we find that the larger the amount of alcohol currently consumed the higher the proportion who state that they are drinking more now. However, it is only amongst those men who drink 51 or more alcoholic units per week that the proportion who consider they are drinking more outweighs the proportion who are drinking less. At the same time, it is worth noting the very high proportion of men in this heaviest drinking group who had not started drinking 10 years ago (40%). Thus, a sizeable number of men fairly rapidly increase their drinking so that they can be classified by us as relatively heavy drinkers within 10 years of their starting to drink.

Turning to Table 5.14B it is clear that, like the men, female regular drinkers are more likely than occasional drinkers to state that they are drinking more now. In contrast to men, however, this is mainly balanced by a higher proportion of female occasional drinkers who consider that they drink less now.

Table 5.13 The distribution of changes in drinking habits now compared with 10 years ago by sex and age at time of interview

	Men				Women			
Changes in drinking habits	17 - 30 years	31 - 50 years	51 years and over	All age groups	17 - 30 years	31 - 50 years	51 years and over	All age groups
Drinks more now	13	25	14	18	6	24	11	14
Drinks less now	8	40	43	32	6	18	22	15
Drinks about the same as 10 years ago	3	32	39	26	3	43	59	35
Hadn't started drinking 10 years ago	76	2	2	23	z 85	14	7	34
Not answered	-	1	2	1	-	1	2	1
All who started drinking as normal behaviour	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*413.8*	*562.0*	*456.0*	*1431.8*	*414.4*	*501.5*	*380.7*	*1299.0*

Table 5.14A Men - The distribution of changes in drinking habits now compared with 10 years ago by current drinking behaviour

Changes in drinking habits	Men - Current drinking behaviour								
	Regular drinkers: Number of alcoholic units per week						All regular drinkers	Occa-sional drinkers	All drinkers
	51+	21 - 50	11 - 20	6 - 10	3 - 5	1 - 2			
Drinks more now	32	26	27	15	14	5	21	7	18
Drinks less now	20	28	26	36	38	36	30	40	32
Drinks about the same as 10 years ago	8	19	19	28	26	44	23	39	26
Hadn't started drinking 10 years ago	40	27	28	22	23	16	26	14	23
All who started drinking as normal behaviour	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*106.3*	*300.3*	*251.3*	*235.0*	*145.0*	*115.0*	*1152.8*	*263.0*	*1415.8*†

† *Base excludes 16.0 non-drinkers who were not asked this question.*

Table 5.14B Women - The distribution of changes in drinking habits now compared with 10 years ago by current drinking behaviour

Changes in drinking habits	Women - Current drinking behaviour						
	Regular drinkers: Number of alcoholic units per week				All regular drinkers	Occasional drinkers	All drinkers
	11+	6 - 10	3 - 5	1 - 2			
Drinks more now	26	20	17	16	18	9	14
Drinks less now	6	7	10	14	10	23	15
Drinks about the same as 10 years ago	25	23	33	40	33	39	35
Hadn't started drinking 10 years ago	44	50	41	29	39	28	34
Not answered	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
All who started drinking as normal behaviour	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*80.8*	*159.0*	*257.0*	*287.0*	*783.9*	*499.5*	*1283.3*†

† *Base excludes 15.7 non-drinkers who were not asked this question.*

Amongst female regular drinkers we find that each group is more likely to state that it is drinking more now rather than less now but the gap between these proportions rises according to the amount currently consumed. (Those who consume 1-2 units have approximately equal proportions, but those who consume 11+ units include 26% who drink more now and only 6% who drink less now.) A high proportion of women who had not started drinking 10 years ago is found amongst all those who drink 3 or more alcoholic units per week. Therefore, as with men, it seems that a large proportion of those who consume a lot of alcohol are recruited from those who did not drink 10 years ago.

(ii) Perceived changes in the public's drinking habits

The question relating to informants' perceptions of changes in the drinking habits of the general public is not directly comparable with that relating to informants' own changes in drinking habits. This is because the former is concerned with whether more, less or about the same *number of people* are drinking in Scotland today whereas the latter is concerned with changes in the actual amount drunk. However, it is still useful to look at the association between these two aspects of changes in drinking habits.

In Table 5.15 we can see that the overwhelming majority of both men and women consider that more people are drinking in Scotland today (83%). Slightly more men than women think that about the same number of people are drinking today. In fact, the proportions of men and women who state that less people are drinking today is infinitesimally small at less than 1%. This is interesting in view of the fact that only 18% of men and 14% of women considered that they themselves were drinking more now than 10 years ago. (The highest proportion of male informants thought they were drinking less now, while the highest proportion of female informants thought they were drinking about the same amount.)

Table 5.15

Informants' perceptions of changes in the drinking habits of the public in Scotland now compared with 10 years ago by sex

Changes in drinking habits of public in Scotland	Men	Women
	%	%
More people drink now	83	84
Less people drink now	I	I
About the same number of people drink now	8	6
In Scotland less than 10 years	2	2
Too young to notice what was drunk 10 years ago	4	4
Can't remember 10 years ago	3	4
Total	100.0	100.0
Base	*1618.1*	*1886.9*

It can be argued that although informants may feel that drinking as such is becoming more widespread they do not think that those who are already drinkers, ie. themselves, are consuming alcohol in larger quantities. However, it seems more plausible that informants, while prepared to state that drinking in general has increased, will not admit that their own drinking has increased.

(iii) Reasons given by informants for more people drinking in Scotland today compared with 10 years ago

Since over four-fifths of our informants thought that more people were drinking today it seemed worthwhile to ask informants what they thought were the reasons for this change; the answers are given in Table 5.16.

The two most popular reasons, each given by about half of men and women, are that the increase is due to more young people drinking and to people in general having more money to spend on drink. The next most frequent reason given by over a third of our informants is that drinking has become more socially acceptable these days.

There are three further reasons which are given fairly often by both men and women. In order of frequency they are as follows: the rather negative attitude that there is nothing else to do but go out drinking, the opinion that more women are drinking now and, lastly, that more people use drink for psychological reasons, eg to relieve tension, help them relax etc.

The only other reason mentioned by a sizeable number of people is that they feel that public houses have become more attractive places and, in particular, men state that they consider the lounge bars suitable places into which they can now take women.

5.17 Summary

1 Stages in the development of drinking behaviour

Only 1% of men and 6% of women have never tasted an alcoholic drink. In fact, the great majority of our informants (88% of men, 68% of women) had reached the stage of drinking as normal behaviour.

We have found that there is a close correspondence between our usual measure of drinking behaviour and the stage reached in the development of drinking behaviour. By definition, all current drinkers must have tasted an alcoholic drink, but while approximately three-quarters and two-thirds of male and female occasional drinkers respectively consider that they have started to drink as a normal habit, over 90% of male and female regular drinkers endorse this view. About two-fifths of current non-drinkers have never tasted an alcoholic drink, a similar proportion have tasted an alcoholic drink but claim never to have really started drinking, leaving only a small proportion who claim to have started drinking as normal behaviour.

2 The first drink

Men tend to have their first drink at a much younger age than women (mean age 18.2 years, as compared with 21.8 years). The age at which the first drink is taken appears to have been falling significantly with successive generations, so that amongst those aged 17-30 the mean reported age of first drink is 15.1 and 16.4 years for males and females respectively, while amongst those aged 51 or over the corresponding mean ages are 21.3 and 27.5 years. Current regular drinkers reported taking their first drink at an earlier age than current occasional drinkers or non-drinkers, so that the lowest mean ages at first drink are found amongst male and female regular drinkers aged 17-30 at the time of interview (mean ages are 15.0 and 16.1 years respectively).

Amongst regular drinkers, it seems that the higher the current level of drinking the more likely it is that informants will have tasted their first drink at a relatively early age.

Table 5.16

Reasons given by men and women for more people drinking in Scotland today compared with 10 years ago

Reasons for more people drinking	Men	Women
	%	%
More young people drinking	53	50
More women drinking	19	17
People have more money now (can afford to spend it on drinking)	56	48
Nothing else to do but go to the pub/(only place for entertainment, meeting people etc.)	20	19
Places of entertainment tend to sell drinks eg restaurants, clubs etc	8	7
Pubs have been made more attractive	13	6
More people use drink to relieve tension, relax, cheer themselves up	12	14
Drinking more socially acceptable	36	39
More leisure time available	6	5
Influence of advertising	6	3
In general more pubs and bars	8	5
Other reasons	11	8
No reason or Don't know	5	11
All who said that more people were drinking	100[ϕ]	100[ϕ]
Base	*1348.1*	*1572.3*

[ϕ] *Percentages do not sum to 100 as informants may give more than one answer.*

Nearly four-fifths of men tasted their first drink in the company of male friends while women are most likely to have tasted their frist drink in the company of female friends.

Finally, it is worth noting that over half the men drank beer as their first drink but the most popular first drink for women was sherry followed by gin, rum or vodka.

3. Drinking as normal behaviour

The results here are very similar to those that applied to the first drink, ie men tend to start drinking as normal behaviour at a younger age than women (21.4 compared with 26.3 years of age). The age at which drinking becomes normal behaviour has reduced over successive generations, and the higher the current level of drinking the more likely it is that informants will have started to drink as normal behaviour at a relatively young age.

In comparison with the first drink, an even higher proportion of men (92%) started drinking as normal behaviour in the company of male friends and, similarly, a higher proportion of women (64%) started drinking as normal behaviour in the company of female friends.

4 Comparison of drinking habits now with 10 years ago

Men are more likely than women to state that they are drinking less now than 10 years ago (32% of men compared with 15% of women say that their drinking has decreased). Furthermore, the proportion of men who maintain that their drinking has decreased over this period greatly exceeds the proportion who say that their drinking has increased (32% compared with 18%). Amongst women, these proportions roughly balance each other.

It appears that a relatively common pattern of consumption amongst men is for alcohol intake to rise sharply from the start of drinking as normal behaviour to a peak in early adulthood and to decline thereafter. Hence we find that a high proportion of the heaviest drinking group (those who consume 51 or more alcoholic units per week) say that they had not started drinking 10 years ago. This same heaviest drinking group amongst men is the only one in which the proportion saying that their drinking has increased over 10 years exceeds the proportion saying that their drinking has decreased.

On the other hand, it is only amongst those women aged 31-50 that we find the proportion drinking more now exceeds the proportion drinking less now - this is probably a reflection of the fact that women tend to start drinking as normal behaviour at a later age than men. A further difference is that it is not only the heaviest drinking group but, instead, all those who are regular drinkers who state that their drinking has increased.

We consider it likely that these results are subject to certain biases. We have evidence from elsewhere in the analysis that there is an overall tendency for informants to underestimate their current rate of consumption and, thus, the proportions saying that their rate of consumption has remained static or fallen over 10 years may be too high.

Finally, in contrast to their opinions about changes in their own drinking, the overwhelming majority of informants (83%) consider that there are more people drinking in Scotland today than 10 years ago.

6 Detailed analysis of 'last week's' drinking

6.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to describe in detail the drinking habits of those who drink at least once a week. Thus, we shall be focussing our interest entirely on regular drinkers and looking at various aspects of their 'last week's' drinking such as the number of drinking occasions, the number of hours spent drinking, the types of beverage consumed, the company with whom drinks were taken and so on.

We have chosen to use the number of alcoholic units consumed per week as our main classificatory measure so that we can compare and contrast heavy, moderate and light drinkers according to the various aspects of 'last week's'drinking.

6.2 Number of drinking occasions

In collecting information on 'last week's' drinking we initially asked informants to recall all the occasions when they drank in the previous week. Our pilot work showed that informants both thought in terms of drinking occasions and were able to distinguish easily between different occasions. When all the drinking occasions had been noted, informants were then asked for details of each drinking occasion such as the types and quantities of beverages they had drunk, the place of drinking etc [see Appendix B, Q.10(ii)-(v)]. For all informants, therefore, we are able to find out their total number of drinking occasions 'last week' and various other aspects of their drinking such as the total number of drinking occasions in a pub, whether they drank beer only, whether they were in all male company etc.

In Table 6.1 and Fig.6(a) we have presented the mean number of drinking occasions that occured 'last week' according to informants' level of drinking (using the six drinking categories for male regular drinkers and four drinking categories for female regular drinkers that we have used in preceding chapters). As we might expect, the table shows that the higher the rate of alcoholic consumption the greater the mean number of drinking occasions. However, this is not a totally predictable result for it would have been possible for heavier drinkers to have *longer* drinking occasions as opposed to *more* drinking occasions than lighter drinkers. In fact, although the number of occasions per week reported by the heaviest drinkers (ie men who drink 51 or more units and women who drink 11 or more units per week) is relatively high, in absolute terms it is surprisingly moderate, ie 8.6 and 5.0 occasions for men and women respectively.

It is interesting to note that where men and women drink the same amount, we find that women tend to have slightly more drinking occasions than men. Thus, it seems that at moderate drinking levels (up to 10 units per week) women tend to drink more frequently but in smaller quantities on each occasion than men. Of course, we should not forget that taking all regular drinkers together men tend to have more drinking occasions than women (3.6 compared with 2.0).

6.3 Number of hours spent drinking

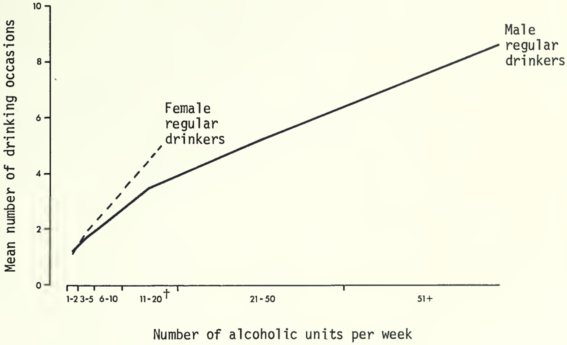
For each drinking occasion we recorded the time at which it started and the time at which it ended. We are able, therefore, to quantify the duration of each drinking occasion (to the nearest half-hour) and, by summing for all drinking occasions, we have the total number of hours spent drinking 'last week'. The mean number of hours spent drinking according to informants' level of drinking is given in Table 6.2 and Fig.6(b).

Table 6.1

Regular Drinkers: Mean number of drinking occasions "last week" by sex and amount drunk

	Male regular drinkers		Female regular drinkers	
Number of alcoholic units per week	Mean number of drinking occasions "last week"	*Base*	Mean number of drinking occasions "last week"	*Base*
51+	8.6	*106.3*		
21-50	5.2	*300.3*	5.0	*80.8*
11-20	3.5	*253.3*		
6-10	2.3	*241.0*	2.8	*161.3*
3-5	1.7	*159.0*	1.9	*261.6*
1-2	1.2	*132.3*	1.1	*357.7*
All regular drinkers	3.6	*1192.1*	2.0	*861.4*

Fig 6(a) Regular drinkers: Mean number of drinking occasions "last week" by sex and amount drunk



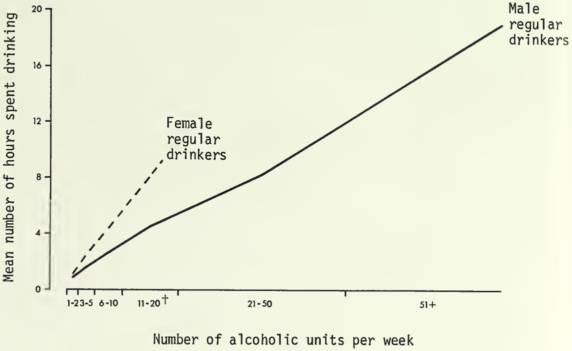
† *The mean for females has been plotted at 18 rather than at mid point as this is their highest drinking category*

Table 6.2

Regular Drinkers: Mean number of hours spent drinking "last week" by sex and amount drunk

Number of alcoholic units per week	Male regular drinkers: Mean number of hours spent drinking "last week"	Male regular drinkers: *Base*	Female regular drinkers: Mean number of hours spent drinking "last week"	Female regular drinkers: *Base*
51+	19.0	*106.3*		
21-50	8.2	*300.3*	9.2	*80.8*
11-20	4.5	*253.3*		
6-10	2.6	*241.0*	4.4	*161.3*
3-5	1.6	*159.0*	2.5	*261.6*
1-2	0.8	*132.3*	1.1	*357.7*
All regular drinkers	5.6	*1192.1*	2.9	*861.4*

Fig 6(b) Regular drinkers: Mean number of hours spent drinking "last week" by sex and amount drunk



† *The mean for females has been plotted at 18 rather than at mid point as this is their highest drinking category*

It is clear from this table and the diagram that the number of hours spent drinking rises both consistently and quite sharply with the rate of alcoholic consumption. (Indeed, the graph is very close to a straight line). Thus, the heaviest drinking groups of men and women drank for a mean of 19 hours and 9.2 hours respectively 'last week'.

It can also be seen that for each level of drinking women consistently tend to drink for longer periods than men, the difference being more marked than in the previous table, which related to the number of drinking occasions. However, we should remember that, overall, male regular drinkers tend to spend a longer time drinking than female regular drinkers (5.6 hours compared with 2.9 hours). Nevertheless, it is still worthwhile to attempt an explanation of why, when amount is held constant, women tend to have longer drinking occasions than men. The answer may lie in the fact that informants described the length of time of the *whole* drinking occasion rather than the time when they were actually drinking and if women were in male company they are quite likely not to have been drinking for the whole period. Another possible explanation is that women may tend to drink more slowly than men, eg sipping a sherry versus downing a pint.

6.4 Days on which drinking took place

In collecting details of 'last week's' drinking it was convenient to list all the drinking occasions that occurred on each day of the week. The questionnaire was designed so that we could record information on each day from Sunday through to Saturday. Consequently, we are able to analyse drinking behaviour both by the total number of days on which drinking occurred 'last week' and by the actual days involved, eg Sunday drinking or weekend drinking.

(i) Total number of days on which drinking took place

If we look, first of all, at the total number of days on which drinking took place 'last week' we can see from Table 6.3 and Fig.6(c) that the greater the amount drunk by informants the higher the mean number of days involved. As with the previous two tables, we find that, when the amount consumed is held constant, there is a slight tendency for women to spread their drinking over more days than men, although, overall, male regular drinkers drink on more days than female regular drinkers (3.0 compared with 1.9 days a week).

(ii) Actual days of the week when drinking took place

In Table 6.4 we have given the proportion of informants who drank at least once on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday etc 'last week' by sex and level of drinking.

If we first note the proportion of all male regular drinkers who reported that they drank on each of the days 'last week' it can be seen that the most popular day for drinking is Saturday when nearly three-quarters had a drink. Over half of the male regular drinkers had a drink on Friday while over 40% had a drink on Sunday. For female regular drinkers the order of preference is the same with 63% having a drink on Saturday, 32% on Friday and 29% on Sunday.

Moving on to the relationship between the amount of alcohol consumed and the days on which it is drunk we must remember that those who drink relatively heavily will be more likely to drink on any given day than those who drink lightly since the number of days on which drinking took place increases with amount drunk (see previous section). Thus, other things being equal, we would expect the proportions of informants who drink on any given day of the week to rise in step with overall weekly consumption.

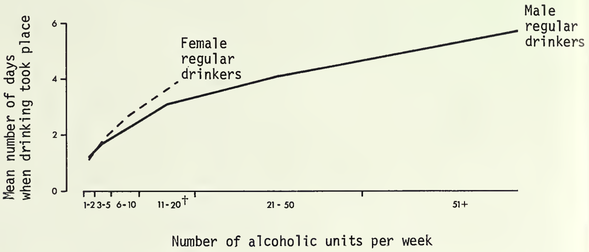
It is apparent that there is a fairly consistent relationship between overall weekly consumption and probability of drinking on each day of the week with the exception of Saturday, where the difference between the lighter and heavier drinkers is much lower than for all other days. The reason for this is that informants who drink relatively little are much more likely to drink on Saturday than any other day of the week (nearly half of those who consume 1-2 units a week

Table 6.3

Regular Drinkers: Mean number of days on which drinking took place "last week" by sex and amount drunk

	Male regular drinkers		Female regular drinkers	
Number of alcoholic units per week	Mean number of days on which drinking took place "last week"	*Base*	Mean number of days on which drinking took place "last week"	*Base*
51+	5.6	*106.3*	-	-
21-50	4.1	*300.3*	3.9	*80.8*
11-20	3.1	*253.3*		
6-10	2.2	*241.0*	2.6	*161.3*
3-5	1.7	*159.0*	1.8	*261.6*
1-2	1.2	*132.3*	1.1	*357.7*
All regular drinkers	3.0	*1192.1*	1.9	*861.4*

Fig 6(c) Regular drinkers: Mean number of days on which drinking took place by sex and amount drunk



† *The mean for females has been plotted at 18 rather than at mid point as this is their highest drinking category*

Table 6.4 Regular Drinkers: Days of the week when drinking took place by sex and amount drunk

Days of the week when drinking took place	Men							Women				
	Number of alcoholic units per week						All regular drinkers	Number of alcoholic units				All regular drinkers
	1-2	3-5	6-10	11-20	21-50	51+		1-2	3-5	6-10	11+	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Sunday	17	20	27	39	63	73	41	14	32	37	54	29
Monday	14	12	25	33	51	80	35	8	18	31	37	18
Tuesday	8	19	25	26	38	66	29	8	9	25	37	14
Wednesday	13	15	22	34	38	74	31	6	17	24	42	16
Thursday	9	19	18	35	49	72	33	9	10	25	51	16
Friday	9	27	37	62	79	95	54	16	26	50	83	32
Saturday	46	53	64	85	90	96	74	47	72	71	97	63
All regular drinkers	100[φ]	100[φ]	100[φ]	100[φ]	100[φ]	100[φ]	100[φ]	100[φ]	100[φ]	100[φ]	100[φ]	100[φ]
Base	*132.3*	*159.0*	*241.0*	*253.3*	*300.3*	*106.3*	*1192.1*	*357.7*	*261.6*	*161.3*	*80.8*	*861.4*

[φ] *Percentages do not sum to 100 as informants may give more than one answer.*

drink on Saturday). On the other hand, the most striking difference between lighter and heavier drinkers is shown by Friday consumption when only 9% of men whose weekly comsumption is 1-2 units had a drink compared with 95% of those weekly consumption is over 51 units.

6.5 The times of day when drinking took place

We were able to calculate the times of day when informants drank by noting the starting and finishing times of each occasion and classifying the time involved into the following periods (according to where the majority of the time fell for each occasion):

Morning	6.00 am	-	12.00 am
Lunch-time	12.00 am	-	2.30 pm
Afternoon	2.30 pm	-	5.00 pm
Evening	5.00 pm	-	10.00 pm
Night	10.00 pm	-	6.00 am

There was also a special category, 'all day' drinking, which refers to a drinking occasion which started in the morning and continued through till the evening or night. It is important to realize that this only applied where the informants themselves considered it a single continuous drinking occasion. Therefore, if they had separate drinks at different times of the day they would be recorded as such, and not as one continuous drinking occasion. In fact an 'all day' drinking occasion implies virtually continuous drinking and it would be reasonable to regard it as the closest measure we have to alcoholism.

In Table 6.5 we have given the proportion of informants who had at least one drinking occasion during the morning, lunch-time, afternoon, etc 'last week' so that, as in previous table, we would expect the heavier drinkers to have higher proportions simply because they had more opportunity through having more drinking occasions. It is clear that the evening is the most popular time of day for drinking amongst both men and women. This is followed by lunch-time and then night for men, but in the reverse order for women.

There were very few informants who reported 'all day' drinking occasions. They are comprised entirely of men and are found only amongst those who drink over 21 units a week and, primarily, amongst those who drink over 51 units a week.

If we now concentrate on the relationship between the amount drunk and the times of day when drinking is carried out amongst men it seems that lunch-time drinking increases the most dramatically (from 23% of those who drink 1-2 units a week to 88% of those who drink over 51 units a week). Although, on a much smaller scale, morning drinking increases quite sharply from only 2% amongst those who drink 3-5 units a week to 13% of those who drink over 51 units a week. Afternoon drinking shows little variation between the different levels of drinking except for the heaviest drinkers who have a significantly higher proportion than the rest (11%).

For women the pattern of drinking seems very similar with lunch-time drinking showing the biggest increase with amount drunk; although night drinking also shows a substantial increase (from 10% to 38%). In contrast to men, we do not find any large increase in morning drinking.

To sum up, the most popular time of day for drinking amongst both men and women is the evening. Men, however, are much more likely to drink at lunch-time than women and this is probably because of a tradition of men often having a drink at lunch-time with their workmates or friends. 'All day' drinking and morning drinking only occur in significant proportions amongst men who drink relatively heavily (ie 21 or more alcoholic units per week).

Table 6.5 Regular Drinkers: Time of day when drank "last week" by sex and amount drunk

Time of day when drank "last week"	Men							Women				
	Number of alcoholic units per week						All regular drinkers	Number of alcoholic units				All regular drinkers
	1-2	3-5	6-10	11-20	21-50	51+		1-2	3-5	6-10	11+	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Morning	-	2	4	2	5	13	4	4	1	1	6	3
Lunch-time	23	21	25	42	65	88	44	8	14	16	37	14
Afternoon	6	6	6	7	7	11	7	3	5	8	8	5
Evening	69	78	88	92	99	99	89	76	90	84	100	84
Night	8	10	13	17	18	25	15	10	17	29	38	18
All day drinking	-	-	-	-	1	6	1	-	-	-	-	-
Not answered	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	
All regular drinkers	100ϕ	100ϕ	100ϕ	100ϕ	100ϕ	100ϕ	100ϕ	100ϕ	100ϕ	100ϕ	100ϕ	100ϕ
Base	*132.3*	*159.0*	*241.0*	*253.3*	*300.3*	*106.3*	*1192.1*	*357.7*	*261.6*	*161.3*	*80.8*	*861.4*

ϕ *Percentages do not sum to 100 since informants may give more than one answer*

6.6 The types of beverage consumed

As part of the record of 'last week's' drinking, informants were asked to give details of the actual beverages they consumed on each drinking occasion. Thus, we know the precise quantities of each beverage consumed at each occasion and we are able, therefore, to calculate the total quantity of each beverage consumed over the whole week by each informant. From this information we are able to obtain the proportion of the total amount consumed 'last week' accounted for by each type of beverage. For example, if a man drank a total of three pints of beer, three single whiskies and one glass of wine 'last week', we can calculate the number of alcoholic units for each beverage; giving 6 units for beer, 3 units for whisky and 1 unit for wine[1]. Since the total amount consumed is 10 units it follows that 60% of the total was beer, 30% was whisky and 10% was wine and 0% for all other beverages.

In practice, for each beverage we calculated the proportion of the total amount consumed by each informant and then found the mean of those proportions for all informants[2], which gives the resultant figures per beverage shown in Table 6.6.

It is clear that amongst male regular drinkers the most popular beverage is beer, which constitutes over half of their overall consumption. The only other two beverages that figure fairly prominently are lager and whisky which account for about 17% each of the average consumption of male regular drinkers.

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[1] *See Table 3.1 p.41*

[2] *Note on calculation for types of beverage consumed.*

A question may be raised as to why we followed the rather complicated procedure given at the beginning of this section, instead of simply working out the total amount of a certain beverage consumed and then percentaging this out of the total amount consumed. The answer is that we wanted out figures to be based on individuals, giving equal weight to each informant, and not to be based on the total amount consumed which gives greater weight to those individuals who drink a lot. The difference between the two methods is best demonstrated by the example given below.

	Beer	*Whisky*	*Total Amount*	*Proportion which is beer*
Person A	*10 pints*	*5 single*	*25 units*	$\frac{20}{25} = 80\%$
Person B	*2½ pints*	*5 single*	*10 units*	$\frac{5}{10} = 50\%$

Thus, by our method the mean proportion of the total amount which is beer is the mean of 80% and 50% = 65%.

Using the method based on amounts only we would find:

Total amount of beer = 10 pints + 2½ pints = 25 units

Total amount drunk = 25 + 10 units = 35 units

Thus, by this method the proportion of the total amount which is beer is $\frac{25}{35}$ *= 71% approx.*

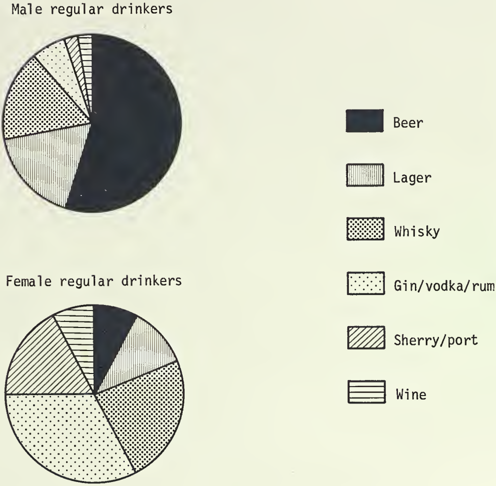
It is clear that the latter method gives greater weight to Person A, who drank a larger quantity of alcohol.

Table 6.6 Regular Drinkers: Proportion of total amount which is beer, lager etc by sex and amount drunk

Mean proportion of total amount which is:	Men							Women				
	Number of alcoholic units per week						All regular drinkers	Number of alcoholic units				All regular drinkers
	1-2	3-5	6-10	11-20	21-50	51+		1-2	3-5	6-10	11+	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Beer	42.0	47.1	56.9	57.2	57.6	62.5	54.7	8.6	9.8	4.3	5.0	7.8
Lager	15.7	18.2	15.6	16.6	18.8	18.3	17.2	9.5	9.6	11.9	21.3	11.1
Whisky	17.8	21.9	17.5	15.4	16.3	11.5	16.8	20.1	26.5	25.1	22.6	23.2
Gin, vodka, rum	8.3	7.9	5.8	6.6	5.3	4.0	6.2	32.2	32.2	33.6	35.2	32.7
Sherry/port	12.8	2.8	1.2	1.2	0.8	0.8	2.6	23.0	14.4	16.4	6.2	17.6
Wine	3.4	2.1	3.0	2.9	1.2	2.8	2.4	6.7	7.6	8.7	9.8	7.6
All regular drinkers	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Base	*132.3*	*159.0*	*241.0*	*253.3*	*300.3*	*106.3*	*1192.1*	*357.7*	*261.6*	*161.3*	*80.8*	*861.4*

On the other hand, if we look at the overall figures for female regular drinkers it can be seen that the most popular type of beverage is spirits like gin, vodka and rum, followed by whisky. Sherry/port is the next most popular type of beverage and finally lager is a beverage which constitutes 11% of the average consumption of female regular drinkers. In Fig.6(d) we have highlighted the differences between male and female drinkers in terms of the types of beverage they consume.

Fig 6(d) Regular drinkers: Mean proportions of each beverage consumed by men and women



Having looked at the overall figures it is useful to examine the differences according to the amount of alcohol consumed. It is clear that, amongst men, the mean proportion which is beer steadily increases with the total amount drunk resulting in 62% of the average consumption of those who drink at least 51 units a week. In contrast, all the other beverages show a decrease in their mean proportions as the total amount drunk increases, except lager, where there is a very slight increase. Thus, the greater the amount of alcohol consumed by men the more likely they are to drink a high proportion of beer, and to some extent lager, and the less likely they are to drink any other beverages.

Turning now to women we find a totally different picture. The two most popular types of beverage, whisky and spirits such as gin, rum and vodka, constitute approximately equal proportions of the average consumption by female regular drinkers, whatever the total amount consumed. On the other hand, lager does show a dramatic increase with amount consumed while sherry/port shows quite a large decrease as a proportion of the total amount drunk 'last week'.

In conclusion, it seems that beer is unquestionably the main drink for all male regular drinkers and that it increases in importance with the total amount consumed. On the other hand, whisky, gin, rum amd vodka are the main beverages drunk by female regular drinkers and they constitute a fairly consistent proportion of all that is consumed per week, whatever the total amount consumed.

6.7 The places where drinking occurred

For each drinking occasion we recorded the place where it occurred according to one of the seven categories corresponding to each row of Table 6.7. We followed a similar procedure to that given in Section 6.6 by noting the total number of occasions in, for example, a pub and then calculating the proportion of all occasions that took place in a pub per informant. The mean proportions of all occasions in a pub, hotel, club etc are given in Table 6.7 according to the total amount consumed.

If we first look at male regular drinkers it can be seen that by far the most popular place for drinking is in a pub (38% of all occasions) while hotels, clubs and in their own home virtually tie for second place at around 17%. On the other hand, female regular drinkers are most likely to drink in their own homes, followed by drinking in a hotel. Amongst women, both hotels and clubs are more popular than pubs; this is probably due to the general character and tradition of pubs in Scotland as male enclaves considered unsuitable for women. A fairly high proportion of women's drinking occasions take place in clubs or other people's homes.

Moving on to the relationship between amount consumed and the place of drinking amongst men, it can be seen that drinking in pubs increases in frequency while drinking at one's own or other people's homes decreases with the rate of alcoholic consumption.

It is interesting that amongst women the group who drink 1-2 units per week seem to be different from the rest. The former are more likely to drink in their own homes (47% of occasions in pubs), and less likely to drink in pubs and clubs, than the latter.

6.8 The types of company with whom informants drink

There are three aspects of the type of company with whom informants drink in which we are interested, namely:-

(i) The relationship to informants of the company with whom they were drinking

(ii) The total number of people who were drinking with informants

(iii) The sex ratio of the group with whom informants were drinking

(i) Relationship to informants of the company with whom they were drinking

In order to simplify a considerable amount of data we categorised the types of company with whom informants drank according to whether they were with spouses, other relatives or friends or any combination of these three and, finally, those occasions when informants were alone. From Table 6.8 we can see the mean proportion of all occasions that were with spouses, other relatives, etc according to the amount drunk.

It is clear from the table that over half of mens' drinking occasions were with friends. The next most frequent category constitutes those occasions when informants were alone - 13%. Although friends are the main source of company for women's drinking occasions, quite a high proportion were with spouses, or spouses and friends together, and very few occurred when they were alone. If we sum the proportion of drinking occasions where spouses were present we find a total of 54.7% of all female drinkers' occasions compared with only 24.3% of all male drinkers' occasions. These findings may seem contradictory but they can be explained by the fact that men have a much greater total number of drinking occasions than women. Consequently, those which occurred with their spouses present constitute a much smaller proportion of male than of female drinking occasions.

Table 6.7 Regular Drinkers: Proportion of all drinking occasions in pub, hotel etc by sex and amount drunk

Mean proportion of all drinking occasions in:	Men							Women				
	Number of alcoholic units per week						All regular drinkers	Number of alcoholic units				All regular drinkers
	1-2	3-5	6-10	11-20	21-50	51+		1-2	3-5	6-10	11+	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Pub	13.6	34.2	39.0	39.3	44.8	50.6	38.1	8.0	17.5	13.4	18.1	12.8
Hotel	12.1	19.7	18.4	20.2	17.1	14.5	17.6	16.9	16.4	22.4	18.7	17.9
Club	15.7	10.1	17.9	17.6	21.0	18.7	17.4	8.3	13.7	19.4	24.1	13.5
At home	42.3	24.6	12.9	13.6	10.0	6.6	16.6	47.1	25.3	26.3	25.8	34.6
At other's home	12.1	8.1	6.0	3.6	2.6	3.1	5.3	10.8	15.9	12.7	11.0	12.7
At work	0.8	0.8	1.0	1.1	1.5	2.3	1.2	1.9	-	0.8	1.6	1.1
Other places	3.4	2.5	4.9	4.7	3.0	4.1	3.8	7.0	11.3	5.1	0.7	7.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Base	*132.3*	*159.0*	*241.0*	*253.3*	*300.3*	*106.3*	*1192.1*	*357.7*	*261.6*	*161.3*	*80.8*	*861.4*

Table 6.8 Regular Drinkers: Proportion of all drinking occasions with spouse, other relatives, etc by sex and amount drunk

Mean proportions of all occasions with:	Men							Women				
	Number of alcoholic units per week						All regular drinkers	Number of alcoholic units				All regular drinkers
	1-2	3-5	6-10	11-20	21-50	51+		1-2	3-5	6-10	11+	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Spouse only	18.9	13.9	9.6	9.4	6.1	4.5	9.8	21.7	13.9	22.3	14.7	18.8
Other relatives only	9.8	8.9	9.9	6.9	7.9	4.8	8.2	12.7	7.7	6.1	1.4	8.9
Friends only	36.5	47.4	44.7	53.7	58.1	64.7	51.2	20.1	32.4	29.2	47.1	28.0
Spouse and other relatives	11.3	3.9	7.0	2.9	4.3	1.5	5.0	14.7	9.2	10.7	3.6	11.2
Spouse and friends	9.8	10.1	9.8	9.5	4.4	4.0	7.9	12.7	26.4	16.8	18.2	18.1
Spouse and other relatives and friends	-	3.9	1.4	1.7	1.2	1.5	1.6	8.0	5.5	5.5	6.2	6.6
Other relatives and friends	2.6	1.3	3.0	2.2	4.8	4.8	3.2	3.8	2.5	5.4	3.5	3.7
On own	11.0	10.7	14.6	13.8	13.2	14.3	13.1	6.4	2.4	4.0	5.4	4.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Base	*132.3*	*159.0*	*241.0*	*253.3*	*300.3*	*106.3*	*1192.1*	*357.7*	*261.6*	*161.3*	*80.8*	*861.4*

Looking at the association with amount drunk it can be seen that amongst both men and women drinking occasions are more likely to occur with friends only and less likely to occur with spouses only as the rate of alcoholic consumption increases.

(ii) The total number of people who were drinking with informants

In Table 6.9 we have presented the mean porportion of all occasions with one other person, two or three people etc according to the amount consumed. It is immediately evident that amongst both male and female regular drinkers the majority of drinking occasions are with just one other person or with two or three other people (64.7% for men, 64.4% for women). Amongst both sexes there is a tendency for the proportion of occasions with four or more other people present to rise with the amount consumed. It should be noted that the proportion of occasions when informants were on their own does not seem to vary according to the rate of alcoholic consumption.

(iii) Sex ratio of group with whom informants drink

The sex ratio of the group, including the informant, was calculated according to whether the group was all male, mainly male, evenly mixed, mainly female or all female. In Table 6.10 we have presented the mean proportion of all drinking occasions which fell into the above categories. (Obviously women could not have any drinking occasions which were all male and vice versa.)

It is apparent that most of men's drinking occasions take place in all male company (50%) while the majority of women's drinking occasions take place in evenly mixed company (60%). It is interesting that men who only drink a little tend to drink in evenly mixed company but this proportion gradually decreases, while the proportion drinking in all male company rises, with amount drunk.

To sum up these three aspects of the company with whom informants' drank, it seems that the majority of mens' drinking occasions take place in the company of friends while the majority of womens' drinking occasions take place with their husbands present. Most men and women tend to drink in the company of one, two or three other people. Amongst men these people are most likely to be other men but amongst women they are likely to come equally from both sexes.

6.9 Summary

The greater the amount of alcohol consumed 'last week', the greater the number of drinking occasions, the number of hours spent drinking and the number of days when drinking took place. When the amount drunk is held constant, women tend to drink on more occasions, spend longer drinking and have more days when drinking occurred than men. Female drinking, therefore, tends to be less concentrated than male drinking.

It seems that Saturday is by far the most popular day for drinking (74% of men and 63% of women drink on Saturday) followed by Friday and then Sunday; Tuesday is the least popular day. The most popular time of day for drinking is the evening, (89% of men, 84% of women drink at this time of day). Although lunch-time drinking is frequently reported by men it is not very often reported by women. 'All day' drinking is only found amongst men who drink relatively heavily.

The main beverage consumed by men is beer (55% of average consumption) and it features more prominently as informants' rate of drinking increases. On the other hand, women are most likely to drink whisky, gin, vodka or rum, whatever their rate of drinking.

While men mainly drink in pubs, women more frequently drink at their home or in other people's homes. However, amongst both men and women, drinking in pubs increases with the amount consumed.

Table 6.9 Regular Drinkers: Proportion of all drinking occasions with 1 other person, 2-3 other people etc present by sex and amount drunk

Mean proportion of all occasions with:	Men							Women				
	Number of alcoholic units per week						**All regular drinkers**	**Number of alcoholic units**				**All regular drinkers**
	1-2	**3-5**	**6-10**	**11-20**	**21-50**	**51+**		**1-2**	**3-5**	**6-10**	**11+**	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
1 other person	40.1	38.9	32.8	31.6	28.4	22.4	32.1	33.4	31.8	32.9	29.6	32.5
2-3 other people	33.6	29.5	33.3	31.8	33.8	33.2	32.6	34.4	32.4	31.0	21.5	31.9
4-5 other people	10.6	12.3	11.7	9.5	13.3	13.8	11.8	13.4	20.7	12.7	15.8	15.7
6-10 other people	1.7	3.6	4.9	8.3	7.4	11.2	6.3	6.4	8.0	12.0	19.1	9.1
11+ other people	3.0	5.0	2.8	5.0	4.0	5.0	4.1	6.1	4.7	7.4	8.5	6.1
DNA - on own	11.0	10.7	14.6	13.8	13.2	14.3	13.1	6.4	2.4	4.0	5.4	4.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Base	*132.3*	*159.0*	*241.0*	*253.3*	*300.3*	*106.3*	*1192.1*	*357.7*	*261.6*	*161.3*	*80.8*	*861.4*

Table 6.10 Regular Drinkers: Proportion of all drinking occasions in all male, mainly male etc, company by sex and amount drunk

Mean sex ratio of group	Men							Women				
	Number of alcoholic units per week						All regular drinkers	Number of alcoholic units				All regular drinkers
	1-2	3-5	6-10	11-20	21-50	51+		1-2	3-5	6-10	11+	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
All male	32.9	44.2	46.4	48.4	59.7	61.2	49.7	-	-	-	-	-
Mainly male	8.7	5.7	5.5	5.6	7.0	5.7	6.3	7.7	4.9	5.5	5.2	6.2
(Approx) evenly mixed	41.0	37.3	31.6	31.2	18.5	18.0	28.8	54.1	64.1	65.6	66.7	60.5
Mainly female	6.4	2.2	2.0	1.0	1.6	0.8	2.1	16.6	12.4	13.8	6.6	13.8
All female	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15.3	16.1	11.0	16.1	14.8
DNA - on own	11.0	10.7	14.6	13.8	13.2	14.3	13.1	6.4	2.4	4.0	5.4	4.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Base	*132.3*	*159.0*	*241.0*	*253.3*	*300.3*	*106.3*	*1192.1*	*357.7*	*261.6*	*161.3*	*80.8*	*861.4*

The majority of mens' drinking occasions take place in the company of friends while the majority of womens' occur in the company of their husbands. With both sexes, though, the proportion of occasions with friends only present increases with the amount consumed.

Most men and women tend to drink in the company of one, two or three other people. However, in the case of men, these people are most likely to be male while, in the case of women, they are likely to be evenly mixed between the sexes. The greater the amount drunk the greater the likelihood of men drinking in all male company (61% of all occasions for those who drink 51+ units per week).

Annex: Age and social class correlates of 'last week's' drinking

In this annex we shall be looking at the differences in 'last week's' drinking, with respect to the beverages consumed, the places where drinking occurred and the company, if any, with whom informants drank, by age and social class. We deliberately chose to concentrate on these two variables as they have proved to be important ones throughout the analysis of drinking habits and attitudes and, moreover, they were thought to be of general interest to health educators.

1 Age correlates of 'last week's' drinking

We shall first examine how informants' age correlates with the type of beverage consumed 'last week', the places where it was consumed and the type of company, if any, that was present.

From Table 6A and Fig.6(e) it can be seen that there are several trends relating to age and consumption of particular beverages. Younger people in both sexes are much more likely than their elders to drink lager but are much less likely to drink whisky. Although a much smaller proportion of sherry is consumed by men than women (out of their total consumption of alcohol per week) it is evident that for both sexes there is a steady increase with age in the proportion consumed that is sherry. Gin/vodka/rum seems to be the most popular type of beverage for women aged 17-50, whisky for those women over 50 years of age, while for men beer is the most popular beverage throughout all age groups.

In Table 6B it can be seen that younger people are more likely to drink in pubs and hotels and less likely to drink at home compared to their elders. It is interesting that amongst women clubs as well as hotels are popular in the 17-30 age range whereas amongst men in the same age group it is pubs and hotels that are most popular as places to drink.

Our analysis of the company with whom informants drink has been confined to three aspects: the relationship to informants of the people with whom they drink (Table 6C), the number of people with whom they drink (Table 6D) and, lastly, the sex ratio of the company with whom they drink (Table 6E). Amongst men, the younger the informant the more likely he is to drink in the company of friends only. Amongst women, on the other hand, it can be seen that both the youngest and the oldest groups spend a large proportion of their drinking occasions in the company of friends but this does not apply to the middle age group. However, in both sexes, the older the informant the more likely is he/she to drink on his/her own. The middle age group (31-50) in both sexes spends a higher proportion of its drinking occasions with spouse and friends than any other age group.

The differences between the age groups shown in Table 6D are fairly small. There is a slight trend showing that younger people are more likely to drink in groups of six or more people. The majority in each age group, however, spend their drinking occasions with one to three other people.

Finally, in Table 6E it can be seen that men aged 17-30 are the most likely to drink in all male company (59.2% of all their drinking occasions). There is a comparable trend for women since, although they most often drink in evenly mixed groups, it is clear that those aged 17-30 are more likely than those older to drink in all female company.

Table 6A Regular drinkers: Proportion of total amount which is beer, lager etc. by sex and age at time of interview

Mean proportion of total amount which is:	Male regular drinkers				Female regular drinkers			
	17 - 30 years	31 - 50 years	51 years and over	All age groups	17 - 30 years	31 - 50 years	51 years and over	All age groups
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Beer	57.9	54.9	50.7	**54.7**	8.7	7.3	7.5	**7.8**
Lager	27.6	14.8	9.0	**17.2**	18.5	9.2	4.6	**11.1**
Whisky	6.7	18.6	25.8	**16.8**	12.6	24.8	34.2	**23.2**
Gin/vodka/rum	5.7	7.0	5.9	**6.2**	38.8	33.8	23.4	**32.7**
Sherry	0.4	2.7	4.9	**2.6**	10.7	17.2	26.4	**17.6**
Wine	1.8	2.0	3.7	**2.4**	10.7	7.7	3.9	**7.6**
All regular drinkers	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*378.1*	*479.0*	*335.0*	*1192.1*	*296.0*	*319.2*	*243.9*	*859.1*

Fig 6(e) Regular drinkers: Mean proportions of each beverage consumed by men and women in different age groups

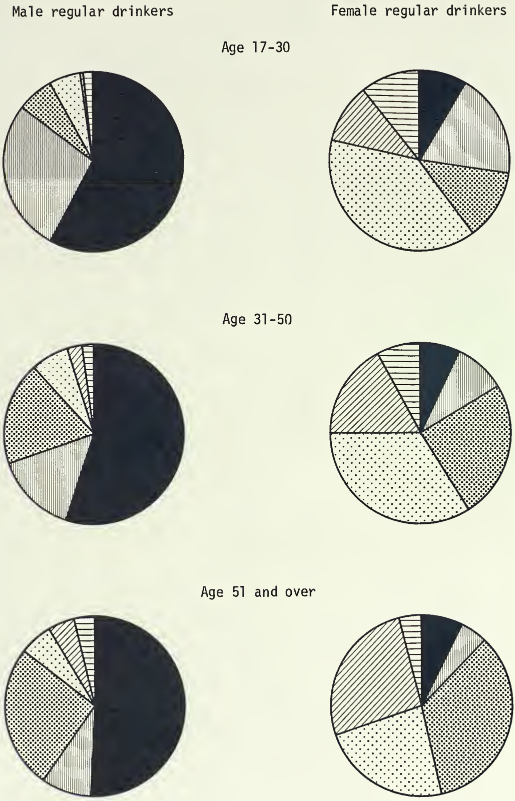


Table 6.B Regular drinkers: Proportion of all drinking occasions which take place in a pub, hotel, club etc. by sex and age at the time of interview

Mean proportion of all drinking occasions in:	Male regular drinkers				Female regular drinkers			
	17 - 30 years	31 - 50 years	51 years and over	All age groups	17 - 30 years	31 - 50 years	51 years and over	All age groups
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Pub	46.6	36.2	31.2	**38.1**	14.4	14.1	9.2	**12.8**
Hotel	22.9	13.2	17.8	**17.6**	23.0	15.2	15.6	**17.9**
Club	11.8	22.1	17.0	**17.4**	19.7	11.8	8.3	**13.5**
Own home	7.4	17.6	25.7	**16.6**	20.5	35.8	49.4	**34.6**
Other's home	5.2	5.8	4.8	**5.3**	10.5	14.7	13.1	**12.7**
At work	0.7	1.6	1.2	**1.2**	1.7	1.3	-	**1.1**
Other places	5.4	3.6	2.3	**3.8**	10.2	7.0	4.4	**7.4**
All regular drinkers	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*378.1*	*479.0*	*335.0*	*1192.1*	*296.0*	*319.2*	*243.9*	*861.4*

Table 6C Regular drinkers: Proportion of all drinking occasions with spouse, other relatives etc. by sex and age at the time of interview

Mean proportion of all drinking occasions with:	Male regular drinkers				Female regular drinkers			
	17 - 30 years	31 - 50 years	51 years and over	All age groups	17 - 30 years	31 - 50 years	51 years and over	All age groups
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Spouse only	3.8	12.4	13.0	9.8	14.5	18.9	24.1	18.8
Other relatives only	7.6	7.0	10.4	8.2	7.1	7.3	13.2	8.9
Friends only	69.7	46.5	37.2	51.2	44.0	23.6	13.9	27.9
Spouse and other relatives	2.2	4.3	9.2	5.0	7.3	11.7	15.4	11.3
Spouse and friends	4.0	12.9	5.2	7.9	18.8	21.6	13.0	18.2
Spouse and other relatives and friends	0.5	2.2	2.0	1.6	3.9	8.9	6.9	6.6
Other relatives and friends	4.6	2.5	2.6	3.2	3.2	5.5	1.9	3.7
DNA - on own	7.6	12.3	20.5	13.1	1.2	2.5	11.7	4.6
All regular drinkers	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*378.1*	*479.0*	*335.0*	*1192.1*	*296.0*	*319.2*	*243.9*	*861.4*

Table 6D Regular drinkers: Proportion of all drinking occasions with 1 other person, 2 others etc. by sex and age at

Table 6D Regular drinkers: Proportion of all drinking occasions with 1 other person, 2 others etc. by sex and age at the time of interview

Mean proportion of all drinking occasions with:	Male regular drinkers				Female regular drinkers			
	17 - 30 years	31 - 50 years	51 years and over	All age groups	17 - 30 years	31 - 50 years	51 years and over	All age groups
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
1 other person	31.5	30.8	34.6	32.1	32.7	31.0	34.5	32.6
2-3 other people	34.6	34.3	28.0	32.6	26.8	36.5	31.6	31.8
4-5 other people	12.3	13.0	9.4	11.8	19.1	13.2	15.0	15.8
6-10 other people	9.4	5.7	3.6	6.3	12.9	9.7	3.8	9.2
11+ other people	4.5	4.0	3.8	4.1	7.4	7.1	3.4	6.1
DNA - on own	7.6	12.3	20.5	13.1	1.2	2.5	11.7	4.6
All regular drinkers	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*378.1*	*479.0*	*335.0*	*1618.1*	*296.0*	*319.2*	*263.9*	*861.4*

Table 6E Regular drinkers: Proportion of all drinking occasions in all male, mainly male etc. company by sex and age at the time of interview

	Male regular drinkers				Female regular drinkers			
Mean sex ratio of group	17 - 30 years	31 - 50 years	51 years and over	All age groups	17 - 30 years	31 - 50 years	51 years and over	All age groups
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
All male	59.2	47.4	42.3	49.7	-	-	-	-
Mainly male	6.2	6.7	5.8	6.3	8.3	6.9	2.8	6.2
Evenly mixed	26.3	31.7	27.6	28.8	62.7	61.2	57.6	60.7
Mainly female	0.8	2.0	3.8	2.1	9.0	17.4	15.2	13.9
All female	-	-	-	-	18.8	12.0	12.8	14.6
DNA - on own	7.6	12.3	20.5	13.1	1.2	2.5	11.7	4.6
All regular drinkers	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*378.1*	*479.0*	*335.0*	*1192.1*	*296.0*	*319.2*	*243.9*	*859.1*

2 Social class correlates of 'last weeks' drinking

In this description of social class correlates we chose, for the sake of greater clarity and simplicity, to adopt the basic division between the non-manual (ie middle) class and the manual (ie working) class.

From Table 6F and Fig.6(f), where we have listed the proportion of the total amount consumed which is beer, lager etc for the two classes, it is clear that amongst men beer is more widely drunk by the manual group while whisky and gin/vodka/rum are more widely consumed in the non-manual group; remembering, of course, that overall beer is the most popular drink in both classes. On the other hand, amongst women, the main difference between the manual and non-manual groups is the former's higher consumption of gin/vodka/rum and the latter's higher consumption of sherry or port. Female members of the manual group are also more likely to drink beer and lager while those in the non-manual group are more likely to drink wine.

In Table 6G it can be seen that the main difference between the manual and non-manual groups with respect to their place of drinking is that the non-manual group are much more likely to drink in their own home or someone else's home. Possibly, keeping alcoholic beverages at home is more of a middle class than a working class habit. Men in the manual group are particularly likely to go out to drink in pubs while their female counterparts are likely to drink in clubs. It should be noted that frequency of drinking in hotels seems to vary little between the two classes and the two sexes - presumably this is because of the greater social acceptance of women drinking in hotels rather than pubs in Scotland.

It is clear from Table 6H that there is little difference between the two classes in terms of the company with whom they drink. The only appreciable differences are that men in the manual group are more likely than those in the non-manual group to drink on their own, while the latter are slightly more likely to drink in the company of their wives (ie spouse only and spouse and friends). Amongst women, on the other hand, there are no differences at all in the type of company with whom the two classes drink.

Turning to Table 6I it is clear that there are no differences between the manual and non-manual groups with respect to the number of people with whom they drink apart from the fact, already noted, that men in the manual group are more likely to drink on their own.

Finally, if we look at Table 6J, which shows the sex ratio of the company with whom informants drink, it can be seen that amongst men the manual group are most likely to drink in all male company while the non-manual group is as likely to drink in evenly mixed as in all male company. Amongst women, however, there are no differences between the two classes.

Table 6F Regular drinkers: Proportion of total amount which is beer, lager etc by sex and social class of Head of Household

Mean proportion of total amount which is:	Male regular drinkers			Female regular drinkers		
	Non-manual	Manual	All classes†	Non-manual	Manual	All classes†
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Beer	40.2	61.9	54.7	6.0	9.5	7.8
Lager	18.3	16.2	17.2	9.7	12.2	11.1
Whisky	21.8	14.8	16.8	23.9	24.2	23.2
Gin, vodka, rum	9.2	4.7	6.2	24.5	39.6	32.7
Sherry / port	4.9	1.4	2.6	24.5	9.8	17.6
Wine	5.5	0.9	2.4	11.5	4.7	7.6
All regular drinkers	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*385.0*	*750.3*	*1192.1*	*368.8*	*402.7*	*861.4*

† *Base includes categories of housewife, inadequately described and not answered.*

Fig 6(f) Regular drinkers: Mean proportions of each beverage consumed by men and women in the non-manual and manual classes

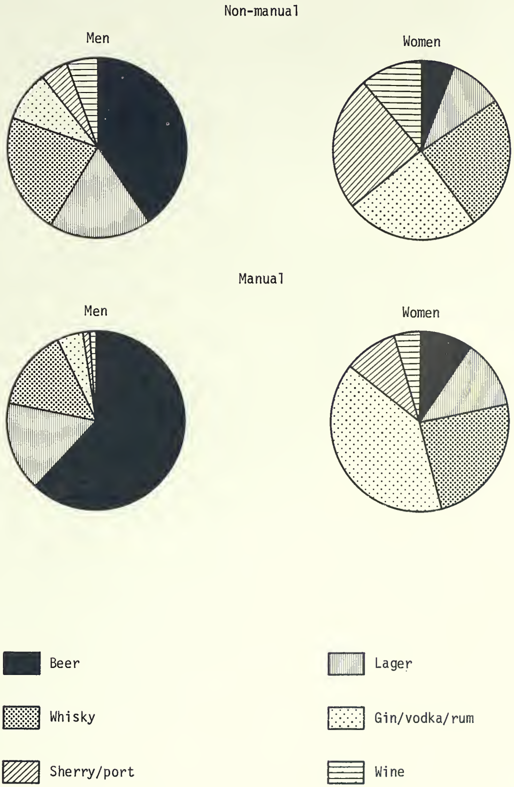


Table 6G Regular drinkers: Proportion of all drinking occasions which take place in a pub, hotel, club etc. by sex and social class of head of household

Mean proportion of all drinking occasions in:	Male regular drinkers			Female regular drinkers		
	Non-manual	Manual	All classes†	Non-manual	Manual	All classes†
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Pub	26.6	43.6	38.1	12.5	13.9	12.8
Hotel	20.0	16.3	17.6	18.0	17.4	17.9
Club	13.1	19.5	17.4	7.0	20.4	13.5
Own home	25.9	12.3	16.6	40.5	28.9	34.6
Other's home	7.4	4.5	5.3	16.6	9.3	12.7
At work	1.4	1.1	1.2	-	2.3	1.1
Other places	5.6	2.7	3.8	5.4	7.9	7.4
All regular drinkers	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*385.0*	*750.3*	*1192.1*	*368.8*	*402.7*	*861.4*

† *Base includes categories of housewife, inadequately described and not answered*

Table 6H Regular drinkers: Proportion of all drinking occasions with spouse, other relatives etc. by sex and social class of Head of Household

Mean proportion of all drinking occasions with:	Male regular drinkers			Female regular drinkers		
	Non-manual	Manual	All classes†	Non-manual	Manual	All classes†
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Spouse only	14.6	7.7	9.8	21.0	18.8	18.8
Other relatives only	5.8	9.6	8.2	8.3	6.8	8.9
Friends only	48.0	51.3	51.2	24.9	26.3	28.0
Spouse and other relatives	6.0	4.9	5.0	12.4	12.5	11.2
Spouse and friends	11.1	6.6	7.9	19.4	20.2	18.1
Spouse and other relatives & friends	2.0	1.5	1.6	7.0	7.7	6.6
Other relatives and friends	2.6	3.4	3.2	3.4	2.7	3.7
DNA - on own	9.8	14.9	13.1	3.7	5.0	4.6
All regular drinkers	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*385.0*	*150.3*	*1192.1*	*368.8*	*402.7*	*861.4*

† *Base includes categories of housewife, inadequately described and not answered*

Table 6I Regular drinkers: Mean proportion of all drinking occasions with 1 other person, 2 others etc. by sex and social class of Head of Household

Mean proportion of all drinking occasions with:	Male regular drinkers			Female regular drinkers		
	Non-manual	Manual	All classes†	Non-manual	Manual	All classes†
	%	%	%	%	%	%
1 other person	34.0	31.6	32.1	31.9	33.0	32.5
2-3 other people	32.0	33.2	32.6	35.1	31.6	31.9
4-5 other people	12.4	11.3	11.8	15.8	15.6	15.7
6-10 other people	6.4	5.7	6.3	8.3	9.1	9.1
11+ other people	5.4	3.3	4.1	5.2	5.7	6.1
DNA - on own	9.8	14.9	13.1	3.7	5.0	4.6
All regular drinkers	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*385.0*	*750.3*	*1192.1*	*368.8*	*402.7*	*861.4*

† *Base includes categories of housewife, inadequately described and not answered*

Table 6J Regular drinkers: Proportion of all drinking occasions in all male, mainly male etc. company by sex and social class of Head of Household

Mean sex ratio of group	Male regular drinkers			Female regular drinkers		
	Non-manual	Manual	All classes†	Non-manual	Manual	All classes†
	%	%	%	%	%	%
All male	41.3	54.4	49.7	-	-	-
Mainly male	7.0	5.4	6.3	6.4	6.7	6.2
Evenly mixed	39.7	23.2	28.8	63.6	61.3	60.5
Mainly female	2.2	2.1	2.1	15.2	14.2	13.8
All female	-	-	-	11.0	12.8	14.8
DNA - on own	9.8	14.9	13.1	3.8	5.0	4.6
All regular drinkers	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*385.0*	*750.3*	*1192.1*	*368.8*	*402.7*	*861.4*

† *Base includes categories of housewife, inadequately described and not answered*

Part II

Attitudes towards drinking

7 Perception of own drinking, heavy and light drinking

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter we shall be concerned with two main aspects of informants' perception of drinking behaviour; firstly we shall be investigating how informants perceive their own drinking and, secondly, how they assess heavy and light drinking amongst other people.

We could not attempt to cover the whole area of informants' perception of their own drinking and so we chose to concentrate on, in our view, the most important area ie. their views on the amount of alcohol they consume. Therefore, we questioned informants on their assessment of the amount they drank compared to the general levels of concumption in the population. We shall relate these views to the amount they actually consume and to general demographic factors. We also wanted to know if informants were satisfied with their current consumption or whether they would like to increase or reduce their drinking. From this information we can find out the characteristics of those who would like to drink less and their reasons for stating this.

The second part of this chapter deals with informants' views on the amounts of alcohol which they consider constitute, on the one hand, heavy drinking and, on the other hand, light drinking. To conduct meaningful campaigns aimed at reducing heavy drinking it is necessary to know the levels of alcoholic consumption generally accepted as heavy drinking. It is also relevant to know if there are any particular groups of informants who assess heavy drinking at a much higher level than average. In order to put informants' views on heavy drinking in perspective we shall compare them with their views on the amounts that constitute light drinking.

7.2 Informants' assessment of their own drinking by current drinking behaviour

All drinkers were asked to state which of the following five descriptions of the amounts people drink fitted them best: 'hardly drink at all', 'drink a little', 'drink about average', 'drink quite a lot' or 'drink heavily' (Q.9(b) see Appendix B p. 289). This question was asked before informants gave details of their last week's drinking as we felt that the latter might bias their opinions of the amount they drank. (For example, some informants might feel obliged, after giving details of every drinking occasion 'last week', to give a higher assessment of their own drinking than they would normally give.)

In Tables 7.1A and B we have shown the proportions of male and female drinkers, sub-divided according to the amount of alcohol they consume, who assess their own drinking at each of the five levels. For simplicity it is best to concentrate on the proportions who perceive their drinking as above average (ie. state that they drink 'heavily' or 'quite a lot'), 'about average', and below average (ie. state that they drink 'a little' or 'hardly at all'). It should be noted that the term 'average' is open to different interpretations but survey experience suggests that informants usually take it to mean 'what most people do' and not the statistical average amount consumed. Thus we do not have informants' assessment of their own drinking compared to the actual average amount consumed but compared to what they perceive as the average (ie. the amount most people drink).

Table 7.1A

Men - The distribution of informants' assessment of their own drinking by current drinking behaviour

Informants' assessment of their own drinking	Number of alcoholic units per week						All regular drinkers	Occasional drinkers	All drinkers
	51+	21-50	11-20	6-10	3-5	1-2			
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Drinks heavily	12	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Drinks quite a lot	39	11	2	2	-	-	7	-	6
Drinks about average	46	74	60	31	16	7	45	7	36
Drinks a little	3	13	34	56	67	54	37	29	35
Hardly drinks at all	-	1	4	12	17	39	10	64	22
All drinkers	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*106.3*	*300.3*	*253.3*	*241.0*	*159.0*	*132.3*	*1192.1*	*349.0*	*1541.1*

It is clear from both tables that most drinkers perceive their drinking as below average (57% of male drinkers and 86% of female drinkers). At the other extreme only 7% of male drinkers and just 1% of female drinkers perceive their drinking as above average.

It is evident that, overall, women assess their drinking at a much lower level than men. We should remember, however, that men tend to drink larger quantities of alcohol than women so that we would expect to find lower levels of assessment amongst women if informants were comparing themselves with all drinkers rather than drinkers of their own sex. It is possible to check this by comparing the assessments of men and women who drink the same amount of alcohol ie. the drinking categories 1-2, 3-5 and 6-10 alcoholic units per week as we know that for these groups there is no appreciable difference in the mean amount consumed by men and women[1]. It can be seen from the tables that there are no appreciable differences in the proportions of men and women assessing their drinking at a given level within each of these categories. We can conclude, therefore, that men and women use the same intuitive standard when they are assessing their own drinking. Thus the overall higher level of assessment amongst male than female drinkers can be accounted for by the former's higher rate of alcoholic consumption.

We would expect to find that those who actually do drink a lot compared to others would also tend to assess their drinking at a higher level. From Table 7.1A it can be seen that male regular drinkers do perceive their drinking at a higher level than male occasional drinkers. 8% of male regular drinkers but no occasional drinkers report

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[1] *See Section 3.2 p.40*

Table 7.1B

Women - The distribution of informants' assessment of their own drinking by current drinking behaviour

Informants' assessment of their own drinking	Number of alcoholic units per week				All regular drinkers	Occasional drinkers	All drinkers
	11+	6-10	3-5	1-2			
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Drinks heavily	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Drinks quite a lot	14	-	-	-	1	-	1
Drinks about average	59	36	25	4	22	2	12
Drinks a little	27	55	68	47	53	35	44
Hardly drinks at all	-	9	6	49	24	62	42
No assessment given	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
All drinkers	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*80.8*	*161.3*	*261.6*	*357.7*	*861.4*	*790.0*	*1651.4*

their drinking as above average. (Conversely, only 47% of regular drinkers compared with 93% of occasional drinkers assess their drinking as below average.) Moreover, there is a strong trend showing that the greater the amount of alcohol consumed the higher is the assessment of their own drinking. The proportion who perceive their drinking as above average rises sharply from 2% amongst those who consume 6-10 alcoholic units per week to 51% of those who consume 51 or more alcoholic units per week. Indeed, it is only amongst this heaviest drinking category that we find a sizeable proportion (12%) claiming to drink 'heavily'. Even in this category, however, there is still a large proportion (46%) who assess their drinking as 'about average'.

In Table 7.1B which shows women's assessment of their own drinking it can be seen that the same trends in relation to the actual amount of alcohol consumed apply as for men. Thus, regular drinkers assess their drinking at a higher level than occasional drinkers and, amongst the former, the greater the amount of alcohol consumed the higher is the general level of assessment. It is only amongst the highest drinking category (11 or more alcoholic units) that we find any women who report that they drink 'quite a lot' and that we do not find a majority assessing their drinking as below average. (64% of the 6-10 units category rising to 96% of the 1-2 units category assess their drinking as below average.)

To sum up, we have found that both male and female drinkers tend to assess their drinking at a relatively low level. Only 7% of male and 1% of female drinkers perceive their drinking as above average while 57% and 86% respectively perceive their drinking as below average. It seems most unlikely that the majority of male and the overwhelming majority of female drinkers actually do drink less than the average amount they perceive most people as drinking. These distortions in perception can be attributed either to informants' overestimation of the amounts most people drink or, more plausibly, to a tendency to underestimate their own drinking compared to other people's. It can be concluded that informants are unable or reluctant to realistically assess their own drinking and this is presumably because they see it as most socially acceptable to say that their drinking is below the average.

7.3 Informants' assessment of their own drinking by age at the time of interview

It seemed likely that people belonging to different age groups might use different standards for assessing their own drinking. In Table 7.2, therefore, we have given the proportions of men and women who assess their drinking at each of the five levels plus the proportion of non-drinkers for our three main age groups ie 17-30, 31-50 and 51 and over.

If we first look at the table for men it is clear that the younger the informant the more likely he is to give a relatively high assessment of his own drinking. Thus, only 2% of men over 50 perceive their drinking as above average compared with 6% of those between 31 and 50 years of age rising to 11% of those between 17 and 30 years of age.

On the other hand, amongst women we do not find a general trend indicating a higher assessment the younger the age of the informant but, instead, we simply find that members of the oldest group tend to perceive their drinking at a lower level than the two younger groups. 5% of women over 50 report that they drink 'about average' while 15% and 18% of women aged 31-50 and 17-30 respectively report that they drink 'about average' or 'quite a lot'.

It can be concluded, therefore, that younger informants do tend to assess their drinking at higher levels than older informants and that the trend is more pronounced for men than women. We know, however, that younger informants tend to have higher rates of alcoholic consumption (see Section 3.4) and in the previous section we established that the latter were associated with higher levels of assessment.

In order to find out if age has a separate influence on informants' assessments of their own drinking it is necessary to look at the distribution of the five levels of assessment within each age and drinking category. When we carried out this more detailed analysis we discovered that within the particular drinking categories there were no differences in assessment between the three age groups except for those men who consumed 21 or more alcoholic units per week where younger informants did assess their drinking more highly (28% of these heavier drinkers aged 17-30 compared with 20% of those aged 31-50 and only 15% of those over 50 perceived their drinking as above average). In general, therefore, the finding that younger people tend to assess their drinking more highly can be accounted for by the fact that they genuinely have higher rates of alcoholic consumption.

7.4 Informants' assessment of their own drinking by social class of Head of Household

Social class, like age, has been shown to be related to many aspects of drinking behaviour and so we were interested to find out if those who belonged to different social classes also assessed their drinking in different ways.

It is clear from Tables 7.3A and B which gives the distribution of assessment levels for each social class that for both men and women there are no consistent trends running from the Professional class (1) through to the Semi and unskilled manual class (5). Amongst men, however, there is some evidence that the manual group (classes 4 and 5) tends to give a higher assessment of its drinking than the non-manual group (classes 1, 2 and 3). The proportions who perceive their drinking as below average are lower amongst the manual than the non-manual group and it is only amongst the former that we found an acknowledgment of heavy drinking.

Amongst women we find that it is only the Semi and unskilled manual class and not the manual group as a whole who tend to give higher assessments of their drinking - only 69% perceive their drinking as below average compared to 76% of women overall. At the other extreme it can be seen that women in the Professional class (1) have an exceptionally high proportion who perceive their drinking as below average (95%) and, in particular, the overwhelming majority of this class report that they 'drink a little' (73%). It is possible to explain this in terms of the actual drinking behaviour of women in the Professional class for we know that they contain the highest proportion of regular drinkers but that they have the lowest mean amount consumed (see Table 3.17). Alternatively it could be argued that women in the Professional class have different attitudes towards drinking from those in the other classes in that they feel a greater social pressure against reporting that they drink 'about average' (or above average) but consider it acceptable to report that they 'drink a little'.

Table 7.2 The distribution of informants' assessment of their own drinking by sex and age at the time of interview

Informants' assessment of their own drinking	Men				Women			
	17 - 30 years	31 - 50 years	51 years and over	All age groups	17 - 30 years	31 - 50 years	51 years and over	All age groups
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Drinks heavily	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	-
Drinks quite a lot	10	5	2	5	1	1	-	1
Drinks about average	44	38	24	34	17	14	5	11
Drinks a little	29	38	33	34	47	48	27	39
Hardly drinks at all	15	16	31	21	27	32	46	37
Non-drinker	1	2	10	5	8	4	22	12
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*436.1*	*598.0*	*782.0*	*1618.1*	*493.9*	*606.4*	*782.0*	*1886.9*

Table 7.3A

Men - The distribution of informants' assessment of their own drinking by social class of Head of Household

Informants' assessment of their own drinking	Social class of Head of Household							
	Prof-essional	Inter-mediate	Other non-manual	Skilled manual	Semi- & unskilled manual	House-wife	Don't know	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%		%
Drinks heavily	-	-	-	1	2	3	-	1
Drinks quite a lot	5	6	2	5	5	12	*4.0*	5
Drinks about average	33	20	31	37	40	42	*11.0*	34
Drinks a little	40	45	35	32	30	23	*5.0*	34
Hardly drinks at all	13	25	25	20	21	18	*1.0*	21
Non-drinker	8	4	6	6	4	2	-	5
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	*	100
Base	*75.0*	*270.0*	*182.0*	*648.0*	*375.3*	*40.8*	*21.0*	*1618.1*

* *Base is too small for percentaging - actual figures given in italics*

Since there is some evidence amongst both men and women that in general the manual group tends to give a higher assessment of its drinking than the non-manual group we decided to find out whether this was a separate effect or whether it could be accounted for by the higher rate of alcoholic consumption amongst the manual group. In Tables 7.4A and B we have presented the proportions of men and women in the non-manual and manual group who perceive their drinking as above average, about average or below average within each drinking category. Amongst men there is a consistent trend throughout all the categories of regular drinking which shows that a higher proportion of the non-manual than the manual group assesses its drinking as below average. There is no difference, however, between the two groups in the proportions who assess their drinking as above average. Turning now to Table 7.4B for women it is clear that we also find a consistently higher proportion amongst the non-manual than the manual group assessing its drinking as below average. It should also be noted that it is only amongst those in the non-manual group who drink 11 or more alcoholic units a week that there is an acknowledgement that their drinking is above average.

To sum up, we have found that the manual group tends to assess its drinking at a higher level than the non-manual group. Moreover, this difference cannot be accounted for by higher rates of alcoholic consumption amongst the manual group as it is present at all levels of current drinking behaviour. Thus social class has a quite separate influence on informants' assessment of their drinking and is revealed in a greater willingness by members of the manual classes to acknowledge that they drink about the same as most people.

Table 7.3B

Women - The distribution of informants' assessment of their own drinking by social class of Head of Household

Informants' assessment of their own drinking	Social class of Head of Household							
	Prof-essional	Inter-mediate	Other non-manual	Skilled manual	Semi- & unskilled manual	House-wife	Don't know	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Drinks heavily	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Drinks quite a lot	-	-	-	1	1	-	4	1
Drinks about average	2	12	11	11	15	6	17	11
Drinks a little	73	45	41	41	33	21	29	39
Hardly drinks at all	22	35	38	38	36	46	30	37
Non-drinker	2	9	10	9	15	27	21	12
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*96.5*	*285.7*	*271.3*	*619.0*	*318.4*	*241.7*	*54.4*	*1886.9*

Table 7.4A Men - The distribution of informants' assessment of their own drinking by current drinking behaviour and social class of Head of Household

Informants' assessment of their own drinking	Current drinking behaviour and social class													
	Regular drinkers : Number of alcoholic units per week										Occasional drinkers		All drinkers	
	21+		11-20		6-10		3-5		1-2					
	Non-manual	Manual	Non-manual	Manual	Non-manual	Manual	Non-manual	Manual	Non-manual	Manual	Non-manual	Manual	Non-manual	Manual
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Drinks above average	24	20	3	2	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	6
Drinks about average	57	71	59	61	26	32	10	21	5	9	6	7	27	40
Drinks below average	19	9	39	37	73	66	91	79	95	91	93	93	68	53
All drinkers	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*90.0*	*287.0*	*75.0*	*164.3*	*88.0*	*148.0*	*71.0*	*85.0*	*61.0*	*66.0*	*114.0*	*225.0*	*499.0*	*975.3*

Table 7.4B Women - The distribution of informants' assessment of their own drinking by current drinking behaviour and social class of Head of Household

Informants' assessment of their own drinking	Current drinking behaviour and social class											
	Regular drinkers : Number of alcoholic units per week								Occasional drinkers		All drinkers	
	11+		6-10		3-5		1-2					
	Non-manual	Manual	Non-manual	Manual	Non-manual	Manual	Non-manual	Manual	Non-manual	Manual	Non-manual	Manual
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Drinks above average	-	21	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Drinks about average	67	57	31	40	17	29	4	6	1	3	11	15
Drinks below average	33	23	69	61	83	70	96	94	99	97	89	85
All drinkers	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*27.3*	*144.3*	*59.0*	*83.1*	*118.6*	*122.6*	*163.9*	*152.8*	*230.0*	*431.4*	*598.8*	*834.0*

7.5 Informants' feelings of satisfaction with the amount they drink

Having examined in detail informants' assessment of their own drinking we shall now look at how satisfied they feel about the amount they drink. All informants were asked whether they were 'quite satisfied' with the amount they drank or if they 'would like to drink more' or would like to drink less' (see Q.16 Appendix B p. 296). In Tables 7.5A and B we have shown the proportions of men and women giving each of these three answers within each category of current drinking behaviour.

Table 7.5A

Men - The distribution of informants' feelings of satisfaction with the amount they drink by current drinking behaviour

Feelings of satisfaction with the amount they drink	Number of alcoholic units per week						All regular drinkers	Occasional drinkers	All drinkers
	51+	21-50	11-20	6-10	3-5	1-2			
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Quite satisfied	81	88	92	93	94	96	91	94	92
Would like to drink more	6	3	2	3	2	2	3	2	3
Would like to drink less	13	8	6	3	3	2	6	3	5
All drinkers	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*106.3*	*303.3*	*253.3*	*241.0*	*159.0*	*132.3*	*1192.1*	*349.0*	*1541.1*

Table 7.5B

Women - The distribution of informants' feelings of satisfaction with the amount they drink by current drinking behaviour

Feelings of satisfaction with the amount they drink	Number of alcoholic units per week				All regular drinkers	Occasional drinkers	All drinkers
	11+	6-10	3-5	1-2			
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Quite satisfied	80	99	99	96	96	96	96
Would like to drink more	6	1	-	3	2	1	1
Would like to drink less	8	-	1	1	1	2	2
Don't know/not answered	6	-	-	-	-	1	-
All drinkers	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*80.8*	*161.3*	*261.6*	*357.7*	*861.4*	*790.0*	*1651.4*

First of all, it can be seen that the overwhelming majority of male and female drinkers state that they are 'quite satisfied' with the amount they drink. A slightly higher proportion of women than men acknowledge this - 96% compared with 92%. Since only 5% of male and 2% of female drinkers are prepared to say that they would like to drink less it can be assumed that very few informants feel that they should reduce their drinking.

However, the proportion who would like to drink less significantly increases with the rate of alcoholic consumption amongst men culminating in 13% of those who drink 51 or more alcoholic units per week. It should be noted that even within this group as many as 81% still claim to be quite satisfied with the amount they drink so that even if the 13% did cut down their drinking the overall numbers of relatively heavy drinkers would only be slightly reduced. In fact, we also find the highest proportion (6%) of those who would like to drink more amongst this heaviest drinking group although it is still considerably smaller than the proportion wanting to drink less. On the other hand, amongst women, the only sizeable proportions who want to alter their drinking are found amongst their heaviest drinking category (11 or more alcoholic units per week) but the proportions who want to drink more, or less, are approximately equal. This result is not very surprising because we know that even in the heaviest drinking category women still drink relatively small quantities of alcohol (mean amount = 18.3 alcoholic units per week) and so they are unlikely to feel the same need to reduce their drinking as the heaviest drinkers amongst men (mean amount = 79.1 alcoholic units per week).

In Table 7.6 we have related informants' feelings of satisfaction to their assessment of their own drinking. It can be seen that amongst men the proportion wanting to drink less rises in step with a higher assessment of their drinking. Thus 18% of men who perceive their drinking as above average acknowledge that they would like to drink less. In view of the previous finding that 13% of men consuming 51 or more alcoholic units per week felt that they would like to drink less, it can be deduced that assessing one's drinking at a high level is a more important predictor of wanting to drink less than actually having a high rate of alcoholic consumption.

Amongst women the proportions who want to drink more, or less, are very low (3% or less) and do not vary between each assessment level. It is interesting, though, that men who assess their drinking as 'about average' do contain a higher proportion wanting to drink less rather than more whereas there is no difference amongst women at this level. Since we know that men and women used the same intuitive standard when assessing their own drinking it can be tentatively concluded that women who consume a comparable amount of alcohol to men are less inclined to feel that they should cut down their drinking.

Lastly, in considering those who state that they would like to drink less we shall briefly cover the reasons given by men and women for this view of their drinking. The number of women who want to drink less is too small to analyse but amongst men financial reasons are most frequently given (51% mention this type of reason). Of more interest is the finding that as many as 40% of men who want to drink less give as a reason the general 'bad' effect it has had either on themselves or other people. Verbatim examples are *"causes a lot of trouble, especially with the family", "It's bad for morals, you become lackadaisical and don't care about the consequences of your actions", "you see what it does to some people and that is enough"*. The only other large category (26%) consisted of those who specifically mentioned that they were worried that drink might effect or was affecting their health. However, the answers given represent a fairly superficial concern with the health effects of drinking eg *"because I'm getting fat, it's beer that puts all the weight on you", "because you get a fat stomach and it can't do you any good, you could put on weight with drinking"*, rather than concern over serious health effects of drinking like cirrhosis of the liver or stomach ulcers which were not mentioned at all.

Turning to the other extreme, those who would like to drink more, we find only 3% of male and 1% of female drinkers prepared to admit this view. We were aware that informants probably would not directly state that they would like to drink more so we asked them if they would drink more if alcoholic drinks were cheaper as an indirect way of obtaining this information. In answer to this question we found that the proportion saying they would drink more rises to 14% of male and 6% of female drinkers. Although this is a hypothetical question which in the current economic situation is most unlikely to occur it is reasonable to assume that these latter figures are closer than the former ones in estimating the proportions who might increase their drinking. A detailed analysis of the reasons for wanting to drink more is not possible because the total number of informants involved is too small but the main reasons mentioned were either social ie. for the company, to get into a social scene, and/or because alcohol makes them feel happier, relaxed etc.

Table 7.6 - The distribution of informants' feelings of satisfaction with the amount they drink by sex and assessment of their own drinking

Informants' assessment of their own drinking		Men - Feelings of satisfaction with amount drinks						Women - Feelings of satisfaction with amount drinks					
		Quite satisfied	Would like to drink more	Would like to drink less	Don't know	Total	*Base*	Quite satisfied	Would like to drink more	Would like to drink less	Don't know	Total	*Base*
Drinks above average†	%	73	8	18	1	100	*101.0*	-	*4.6*	*4.6*	*2.3*	*	*11.4*
Drinks about average	%	91	2	7	-	100	*554.3*	96	1	2	1	100	*204.6*
Drinks a little	%	94	2	3	-	100	*542.6*	98	1	-	-	100	*735.0*
Hardly drinks at all	%	95	3	2	-	100	*342.3*	96	1	3	-	100	*698.1*
No assessment given	%	-	-	-	-	-	-	*2.3*	-	-	-	*	*2.3*
All drinkers	%	92	3	5	-	100	*1541.1*	96	1	2	-	100	*1646.7*

† *Includes those who reported that they drank 'quite a lot' or 'heavily'*

* *Base is too small for percentaging - actual figures given in italics*

7.6 The measures used for estimation of the amounts that constitute heavy and light drinking

Having discussed informants' views on their own drinking we shall now concentrate on their views on heavy and light drinking in the general population. As with their assessment of their own drinking we only asked for their views on the amount of alcohol consumed by heavy and light drinkers. We felt that estimates of the levels of consumption constituting heavy and light drinking were the most important aspects of this subject and, furthermore, our exploratory studies had shown that it was difficult for informants to describe other aspects such as the personality characteristics of heavy and light drinkers.

For reasons of standardisation and ease of comprehension we decided to present our informants with two scales on which they had to mark the levels which they though constituted heavy and light drinking (see Q.7 Appendix B p. 291). The scales represented pints of beer and bottles of whisky as these were the two main beverages commonly referred to by informants in our exploratory work[1]. (It should be pointed out, as we mentioned to our informants, that the scales are in no way comparable and should be treated as entirely independent assessments for beer and whisky drinkers respectively.) We decided to only ask for an assessment of male heavy drinking and light drinking as we thought that this would be the most meaningful and relevant type of assessment and, in any case, we thought that many informants might automatically only consider men in estimating heavy drinking.

To avoid confusion over the term 'level of drinking' we asked informants to estimate the lower limit for heavy drinking, ie. the level at which they felt heavy drinking started, and the upper limit for light drinking, ie. the level up to which drinking is still considered to be light drinking. Thus, we have estimates of the minimum level for heavy drinking and maximum level for light drinking.

In the subsequent analyses we shall first examine the overall mean estimates of the minimum level of heavy drinking for beer and whisky drinkers separately. We shall then compare the mean estimates of heavy drinking given by those with different drinking and demographic characteristics. Lastly we shall note the overall mean estimates of the maximum level of light drinking and ascertain from this whether informants see a large or small difference between the two levels of drinking.

7.7 Overall estimates of the minimum level of heavy drinking

The minimum levels of heavy drinking for beer and whisky drinkers were assessed at 30.2 pints of beer and 2.2 bottles of whisky per week respectively. Since these two amounts are approximately equivalent in terms of alcoholic content (ie. 60 alcoholic units) it seems that informants' perceptions of heavy drinking are fairly consistent irrespective of the beverage consumed.

This overall mean estimate for the minimum level of heavy drinking (ie. 60 alcoholic units per week) can be applied to the actual distribution of informants' drinking to see how many would be classified as heavy drinkers. In fact, 5% of male drinkers consume 60 or more alcoholic units per week which is considerably higher than the 1% of male drinkers who acknowledge that they drank heavily (see Section 7.2).

7.8 Mean estimates of the minimum level of heavy drinking by current drinking behaviour

The previous overall estimates we have given may disguise variations between different groups. Therefore in Table 7.7 we have presented male and female informants' estimates of the minimum levels of heavy drinking for male beer drinkers (A) and male whisky drinkers (B) according to their own current drinking behaviour.

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[1] *We were aware, of course, that is is a common practice in Scotland for beer and whisky to be drunk consecutively but it would have been impracticable to include this type of drinking on a simple scale.*

Table 7.7

The distribution of the mean estimates of the minimum level of heavy drinking by sex and current drinking behaviour

A Mean estimates for male beer drinkers

	Men		Women	
No. of alcoholic units per week	Mean no. of pints of beer	*Base*	Mean no. of pints of beer	*Base*
51+	40.9	*106.3*		
21-50	35.5	*300.3*	33.7	*80.8*
11-20	31.9	*253.3*		
6-10	31.4	*241.0*	31.2	*161.3*
3-5	30.5	*159.0*	28.4	*261.6*
1-2	27.3	*132.3*	27.4	*362.2*
All regular drinkers	32.8	*1192.1*	29.0	*865.9*
Occasional drinkers	29.6	*349.0*	28.0	*785.4*
Non-drinkers	28.0	*77.0*	28.2	*235.6*
Total	32.0	*1618.1*	28.5	*1886.9*

B Mean estimates for male whisky drinkers

	Men		Women	
No. of alcoholic units per week	Mean no. of bottles of whisky	*Base*	Mean no. of bottles of whisky	*Base*
51+	2.7	*106.3*		
21-50	2.4	*300.3*	2.3	*80.8*
11-20	2.3	*253.3*		
6-10	2.2	*241.0*	2.3	*161.3*
3-5	2.1	*159.0*	2.1	*261.6*
1-2	2.0	*132.3*	2.2	*362.2*
All regular drinkers	2.3	*1192.1*	2.2	*865.9*
Occasional drinkers	2.1	*349.0*	2.2	*785.4*
Non-drinkers	2.1	*77.0*	2.1	*235.6*
Total	2.2	*1618.1*	2.2	*1886.9*

Table 7.8

The distribution of the mean estimates of the minimum level of heavy drinking by sex and age at the time of interview

A Mean estimates for male beer drinkers

Age at time of interview	Men		Women	
	Mean no. of pints of beer	*Base*	Mean no. of pints of beer	*Base*
17-30	32.6	*436.1*	30.4	*493.9*
31-50	31.8	*598.0*	27.8	*606.4*
51+	31.7	*584.0*	27.8	*782.0*
Not answered	*	-	*	*4.6*
Total	32.0	*1618.1*	28.5	*1886.9*

B Mean estimates for male whisky drinkers

Age at time of interview	Men		Women	
	Mean no. of bottles of whisky	*Base*	Mean no. of bottles of whisky	*Base*
17-30	2.2	*436.1*	2.0	*493.9*
31-50	2.2	*598.0*	2.2	*606.4*
51+	2.3	*584.0*	2.2	*782.0*
Not answered	*	-	*	*4.6*
Total	2.2	*1618.1*	2.2	*1886.9*

** Base is too small to give a reliable mean*

Table 7.9

The distribution of the mean estimates of the minimum level of heavy drinking by sex and social class of the Head of Household

A Mean estimates for male beer drinkers

	Men		Women	
Social class of Head of Household	Mean no. of pints of beer	*Base*	Mean no. of pints of beer	*Base*
Professional	28.5	*75.0*	26.3	*96.5*
Intermediate	28.0	*270.0*	27.6	*285.7*
Other non-manual	29.8	*182.0*	27.4	*271.3*
Skilled manual	32.8	*648.0*	30.0	*619.0*
Semi and unskilled manual	34.6	*375.3*	29.6	*318.4*
Housewife	35.3	*40.8*	26.5	*241.7*
Not answered / Inadequately described	*	*27.0*	26.6	*54.4*
Total	32.0	*1618.1*	28.5	*1886.9*

B Mean estimates for male whisky drinkers

	Men		Women	
Social class of Head of Household	Mean no of bottles of whisky	*Base*	Mean no. of bottles of whisky	*Base*
Professional	1.9	*75.0*	1.8	*96.5*
Intermediate	2.1	*270.0*	2.2	*285.7*
Other non-manual	2.1	*182.0*	2.1	*271.3*
Skilled manual	2.3	*648.0*	2.3	*619.0*
Semi and unskilled manual	2.5	*375.3*	2.4	*318.4*
Housewife	2.4	*40.8*	2.0	*241.7*
Not answered / Inadequately described	*	*27.0*	1.9	*54.4*
Total	2.2	*1618.1*	2.2	*1886.9*

* *Base is too small to give a reliable mean*

It is clear that, overall, men tend to give higher estimates than women of heavy drinking when they assess beer drinkers (32.0 pints of beer conpared with 28.5 pints). However, in the assessment of heavy drinking for whisky drinkers there is no difference in the overall mean estimates given by men and women (2.2 bottles of whisky). A plausible explanation for men's higher estimate with respect to beer drinkers is that they themselves drink considerably more beer than women - in fact it is the most popular beverage consumed by men[1] - so that to preserve a distinction between their own drinking and heavy drinking they are likely to assess the latter at a higher level.

Moving on to the estimates of those who consume different quantities of alcohol there is a very strong and consistent trend showing that increasing consumption is associated with a higher mean estimate of heavy drinking for beer drinkers amongst both sexes. For men the mean estimate increases by nearly 50% since non-drinkers assess the minimum level as 28.0 pints of beer while the heaviest drinking category assesses it at 40.9 pints of beer. It should be noted that those men and women who drink a comparable amount of alcohol (ie. the three categories 1-2, 3-5 and 6-10 alcoholic units per week) show no variation in their mean estimates of heavy drinking.

The trend showing that a higher rate of alcoholic consumption is associated with a higher estimate of heavy drinking is repeated for the assessment of whisky drinkers. However, the range of estimates is much reduced (even when converted into equivalent numbers of alcoholic units) and although the trend is easily identified amongst men it is only just noticeable amongst women.

In general, therefore, the greater the amount of alcohol informants consume the higher will be their estimate of heavy drinking. This is probably because, as we know, very few informants assess their own drinking as heavy drinking (see Section 7.2), and consequently at each level of alcoholic consumption there is a desire to preserve a distinction between the amount they drink and heavy drinking. Alternatively, it could be that those who relatively drink a lot are more aware of higher levels of alcoholic consumption through their social milieu and so are more likely to assess the threshold of heavy drinking a a higher level.

7.9 Mean estimates of the minimum level of heavy drinking by age at the time of interview

It seemed likely that informants in different age groups might estimate heavy drinking at different levels so that in Table 7.8 we have presented the mean estimates of the minimum level of heavy drinking for the three age groups ie. 17-30, 31-50 and 51 and over.

In Table 7.8A it can be seen that those aged 17-30 give the highest estimates for the minimum level of heavy drinking for beer drinkers. The difference in estimates between those aged 30 or under and those older is much greater for women than men. On the other hand, an examination of the estimates of the minimum level of heavy drinking for whisky drinkers shows no difference according to age.

7.10 Mean estimates of the minimum level of heavy drinking by social class of Head of Household

From Table 7.9A it can be seen that those men and women who belong to the manual group tend to give higher estimates of the minimum level of heavy drinking than those in the non-manual group. This result is replicated in Table 7.9B for estimates of the minimum level of heavy drinking for male whisky drinkers. It should also be pointed out that the Professional class give exceptionally low mean estimates for the minimum level of heavy drinking for whisky drinkers (.19 and 1.8 bottles of whisky for men and women respectively).

Since we know that higher rates of alcoholic consumption are found amongst the manual group (see Section 3.7) this may explain why they give higher estimates of the minimum level of heavy drinking than the non-manual group.

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[1] *See Section 6.6 p.116*

7.11 Overall estimates of the maximum level of light drinking

As in the previous analysis for heavy drinking we calculated the overall mean estimates given by all informants for the maximum level of light drinking for beer and whisky drinkers separately. The estimate for beer drinkers is 9.6 pints (approximately 19 alcoholic units) while the estimate for whisky drinkers is much lower in actual alcoholic content viz 0.5 bottles (approximately 13 alcoholic units). Therefore, although there was a very close correspondence in the amounts given for heavy drinking it is clear that informants tend to perceive a much lower level as constituting light drinking for whisky drinkers compared with beer drinkers. One possible reason is that they may find it harder to accept 'hard liquor' such as whisky drinking as constituting light drinking unless the quantity involved is very small.

If we calculate the overall mean number of alcoholic units that constitute the maximum level of light drinking by taking beer and whisky together we obtain a mean of 16 alcoholic units per week (ie. the mean of 19 and 13 alcoholic units). Using this overall standard and applying it to the actual distribution of male alcoholic consumption we find that 69% of male drinkers would be categorised as light drinkers. (This proportion includes all occasional drinkers and those regular drinkers who drink 16 alcoholic units or less.)

7.12 Comparison between the mean estimates for light drinking and heavy drinking

The overall mean estimates for the minimum level of heavy drinking for beer drinkers was 30.2 pints of beer and we have found that the estimate for the maximum level of light drinking is 9.6 pints of beer. It is clear, therefore, that in general informants see a considerable difference between these two levels of drinking. In Fig. 7 we have highlighted this difference shown by the gap between the thick line, representing heavy drinking, and the dotted line, representing light drinking, for male beer and whisky drinkers.

Taking first the estimates for beer drinkers it can be seen that for men both heavy and light drinking estimates rise in the same proportion with amount consumed so that the difference between the two lines remains fairly constant (21.8 pints for regular drinkers, 19.5 pints for non-drinkers). Amongst women, regular drinkers tend to have higher estimates of heavy and light drinking than occasional or non-drinkers whose estimates do not vary so, again, we find a constant difference in amount (19.8 pints for regular drinkers, 19.5 pints for non-drinkers).

Turning now to whisky drinkers we have seen that the mean estimate for heavy drinking was 2.2 bottles (Section 7.7) and that the mean estimate for light drinking was 0.5 bottles (Section 7.11). As with beer drinkers, there is a large difference between the two estimates so that informants do not consider that where light drinking stops heavy drinking starts. In fact there is no variation in the mean estimates for light drinking by sex or amount consumed so that the size of the gap between the two levels varies according to the estimate for heavy drinking. Since we know that this latter estimate shows only a little variation, we also find a constant difference between the two levels whatever informants' own rate of consumption.

Thus, the minimum level of heavy drinking and maximum level of light drinking are seen to be separated by a large difference in alcoholic consumption. Moreover, the actual amount of alcohol constituting this difference varies very little between all groups of informants.

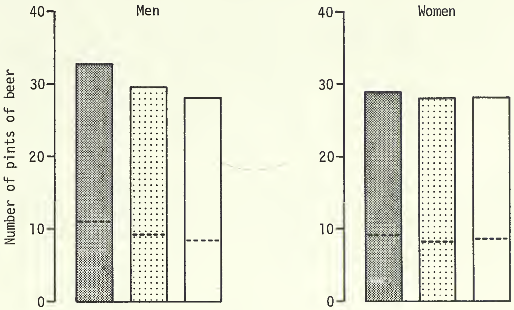
7.13 Summary

1 Informants' perception of their own drinking

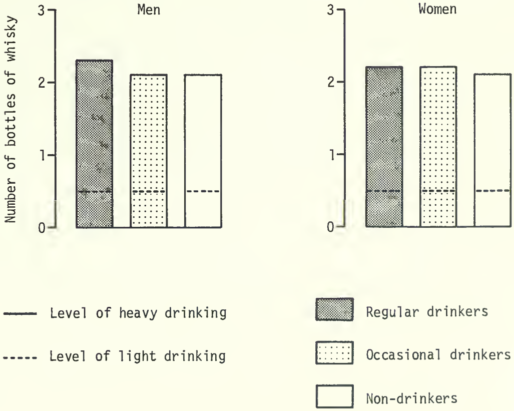
57% of male drinkers and 86% of female drinkers assess their own drinking as below the amount they perceive as the average (ie. report that they 'drink a little' or 'hardly drink at all'). On the other hand only 7% of male drinkers and 1% of female drinkers assess their drinking as above average [ie. report that they 'drink quite a lot' or 'drink heavily' (men only)]. It is clear, therefore, that informants tend to underestimate their own

Fig 7 Comparison of the mean estimates for heavy and light drinking by sex and current drinking behaviour

A Mean estimates for male beer drinkers



B Mean estimates for male whisky drinkers



drinking. It is possible that informants believe that much greater quantities of alcohol are consumed by other people than actually are but it is more likely that they tend to assess their drinking as below average because they perceive this as the most socially acceptable response.

We have found that informants' assessment of their own drinking rises systematically with the actual amount of alcohol they consume. The only group however, who contain a majority (51%) acknowledging that their drinking is above average are men who consume 51 or more alcoholic units per week; even in this group, only 11% considered that they drank 'heavily'.

Our results show that men and women use the same intuitive standard when assessing their own drinking since those who drink comparable quantities of alcohol perceive their drinking at the same level. Younger informants tend to assess their drinking at higher levels than older informants but this can be explained by the former's higher rate of alcoholic consumption. Members of the manual classes give higher assessments of their own drinking than the non-manual classes and this persists whatever the rate of alcoholic consumption. Thus it seems that members of the manual classes are less prone to 'play down' their actual level of drinking.

The vast majority of male and female drinkers assert that they are quite satisfied with the amount of alcohol they consume (92% and 96% respectively). However, we did discover an important minority of male drinkers (5%) who expressed a desire to drink less. This proportion rises to 18% amongst those men who acknowledge that they drink 'heavily' or 'quite a lot' compared with 13% of those who actually do drink relatively heavily (ie. 51 or more alcoholic units per week).

2 Informants' perception of heavy and light drinking

The overall mean estimates for the minimum level of heavy drinking are 30.2 pints for male beer drinkers and 2.2 bottles for male whisky drinkers. In fact, these two amounts are equivalent in terms of actual alcoholic content, ie. 60 alcoholic units, and if we applied this level to the actual distribution of informants' drinking we would categorise 5% of male drinkers as heavy drinkers. Moreover, the majority of men drinking 51 or more alcoholic units would be classed as heavy drinkers. Thus, there is a close correspondence between the public's estimate and our own criterion of relatively heavy drinking. However, although informants apply a particular standard to others they do not seem to apply it to themselves as only 1% of male drinkers acknowledged that they were heavy drinkers. Even amongst our group of relatively heavy drinkers only 11% saw themselves as heavy drinkers.

Those who consume the greatest quantities of alcohol give the highest estimates for heavy drinking presumably in order to preserve a distinction between their own drinking and the amount they perceive as heavy drinking. A further characteristic of those who give relatively high estimates is belonging to the manual classes. Thus, if there is any feeling that the public should accept lower levels of drinking as constituting heavy drinking these groups may need special attention.

The overall mean estimates for the maximum level of light drinking are 9.6 pints of beer (19 alcoholic units) and 0.5 bottles of whisky (13 alcoholic units). Since the latter estimate is much lower in terms of actual alcoholic content it is likely that informants tend to view whisky drinking as light drinking only if the quantities involved are very small. By taking the mid point of these two estimates (16 alcoholic units) we find that 69% of male drinkers would be categorised as light drinkers.

8 Motivation for drinking

8.1 Introduction

One of the most important areas of analysis in any study of drinking behaviour is individuals' motivation for drinking. There are probably a whole range of conscious and unconscious reasons why people drink but in a survey of the general population using a structured questionnaire it is only possible to try to identify individuals' conscious reasons for drinking.

A considerable amount of research has been carried out in America on motivation for drinking ranging from early studies which asked people directly to give their reasons for drinking to later studies which have presented predetermined sets of reasons to informants and used sophisticated statistical techniques to analyse their answers. In reviewing this research Cahalan[1] has pointed out that reasons for drinking appear to divide into two main groups which represent two underlying motives for drinking. The first group consists of 'social' reasons (eg to be sociable, to celebrate special occasions) which he has interpreted as using alcohol as a social catalyst. The second group consists of 'escape' reasons for drinking (eg to forget worries, relax, cheer oneself up) and has been interpreted as using alcohol for a drug effect.

In their study of motivation for drinking amongst men in a London suburb Edwards et al[2] devised a set of reasons for drinking based on the previous American research but instead of finding just two types of motivation they identified a third. As a result of factor analysing individuals' answers to the set of reasons, they obtained two factors which are comparable to the 'escape' and 'social' types of motivation (ie 'ataractic' and 'clubbable') but they discovered a third factor defined by them as 'sophisticated' motivation. The main reasons contributing to this factor were 'I like the taste', 'it goes well with meals', 'because I get thirsty' and this seemed to imply a sophisticated use of alcohol - enjoyment of the actual beverage itself. In fact, Cahalan had included two reasons for drinking ('I like the taste' and 'improves my appetite for food') which did not fit into his 'escape' or 'social' groups and which similarly reflect this enjoyment of the actual beverage. However, he did not feel this was an important aspect of motivation, despite the high endorsement rate of these two reasons and so included them in a miscellaneous category.

In devising our own set of reasons for drinking we initially asked our informants (in our exploratory work) to state their reasons for drinking in answer to an open-ended question. From their answers we were able to confirm that the reasons given largely resembled those found in the previous research. At the pilot stage, therefore, we presented informants with a set of reasons, which covered the three main types of motivation. This set of reasons was then amended[3] giving a final list of fifteen reasons which were incorporated in the main questionnaire (see Q.14 Appendix B p. 295).

[1] *American Drinking Practices - Cahalan, Cisin, Crossley pp 164-5.*

[2] *A comparison of female and male motivation for drinking - Edwards, Hensman and Peto. The International Journal of the Addictions 8(4) pp 577-587.*

[3] *Amendment of the original set of reasons was based on the results of a correlational analysis which revealed three main clusters closely resembling the three types of motivation. Some reasons were excluded because they had very low correlations with each of the three clusters (eg. 'out of habit', 'because it helps me sleep well') while other reasons were added to strengthen the clusters (eg. 'because it's the polite thing to do', 'improves my appetite for food'). The wording of some reasons was altered to avoid ambiguity.*

It should be pointed out that we have not obtained an exhaustive list of reasons why people drink but, instead, we have chosen to concentrate on those reasons which contribute to the three main types of motivation identified by both previous research and our own exploratory work.

In analysing the results we shall first look at informants' answers to the whole set of reasons in order to identify the particular reasons most frequently given. Moreover, we shall examine any variation in the frequency of endorsement of reasons by sex and current drinking behaviour.

In the second part of this chapter we shall describe the results of a factor analysis of the set of reasons and compare the factors obtained with those from previous research. In addition, we shall compare and contrast the mean scores on each of the factors amongst informants who consume different amounts of alcohol and who have different social backgrounds.

Finally, it is necessary to point out that the results should be interpreted with some degree of caution. Motivation for drinking may well be a sensitive subject for some informants and there may be bias in their willingness to endorse certain reasons for drinking.

8.2 The proportions of male and female drinkers who endorse each reason for drinking

In Table 8.1 we have given the proportion of male and female drinkers who endorse each reason for drinking, listed in descending order of frequency with which male drinkers mention each reason. (The relative position of each reason is shown by its rank amongst male and female drinkers separately.)

Inspection of the table shows that the two reasons most frequently endorsed by both men and women are 'to celebrate' and 'to be sociable'. The majority of male and female drinkers mentioned these reasons. These were the two reasons that Cahalan found were mentioned more frequently than all others and, similarly, Edwards, although he only included the reason 'to celebrate', found that this reason was endorsed by an outstandingly high proportion of male and female drinkers. The other two 'social' as opposed to 'personal' (ie. escape or enjoyment) reasons are drinking because 'it's the polite thing to do' (ranked 5 and 3 by male and female drinkers) and drinking because 'the people I know drink' (ranked 10 and 11 by male and female drinkers). Therefore, although there is some evidence that the social reasons tend to be ranked highly there is not the sharp distinction between high ranking 'social' reasons and low ranking 'personal' reasons which Cahalan found. However, this find does support Edwards' results where he found an intermingling of social and personal reasons in the rate of endorsement by both male and female drinkers.

In general it is clear that male drinkers tend to endorse more reasons for drinking than female drinkers. There are nine reasons which are mentioned by a significantly larger proportion of male than female drinkers (marked by # in Table 8.1). A possible explanation is that since men both tend to drink more frequently and have more drinking occasions than women[1], they are likely to be drinking in a greater variety of circumstances so that alcohol may be serving more functions for them. The overall male/female discrepancy in reporting of reasons was not found in the other studies but this may be accounted for by the greater disparity in drinking habits by sex which we found in the Scottish population than occurred in the American and English populations.

The table also shows, however, that there are some reasons which are much more frequently mentioned by male than by female drinkers. The reasons are 'I find it refreshing', 'I enjoy the taste of it', and 'it improves my appetite for food' where the proportions endorsing the reason are approximately twice as high amongst male as female drinkers. It should be noted, however, that the proportion who drink because 'it goes well with meals' does not differentiate between men and women. Thus, there is some evidence that motivation based on the enjoyment of the actual beverage tends to characterise male more than female drinking.

[1] *See Sections 6.2 – 6.4 p.108*

Table 8.1
The proportions of drinkers who endorse[†] each reason for drinking by sex

Reason for drinking	Male drinkers	Rank	Female drinkers	Rank
	%		%	
I drink when I want to celebrate something	75	(1)	78	(1)
I drink to be sociable	65	(2)	58	(2) #
I drink because I find it refreshing	65	(3)	30	(4) #
I drink because I enjoy the taste of it	51	(4)	27	(5) #
I drink because it's the polite thing to do in certain situations	39	(5)	42	(3)
I drink to help myself relax	34	(6)	21	(7) #
I drink because it makes me feel good	25	(7)	14	(9) #
I drink because it goes well with meals	24	(8)	24	(6)
I drink to cheer myself up	22	(9)	14	(10) #
I drink because the people I know drink	21	(10)	13	(11) #
I drink because it helps me feel at ease with people	21	(11)	18	(8)
I drink because it improves my appetite for food	13	(12)	7	(13) #
I drink because it gives me confidence	10	(13)	9	(12)
I drink to forget my worries	9	(14)	5	(14) #
I drink when I want to pull myself together	6	(15)	5	(15)
Base (all male drinkers, all female drinkers)	100	*1541.1*	100	*1651.4*

[†] *This includes all those who said it was a reason for their drinking whether it was an important or not important reason.*

# Significant difference between male and female drinkers (p<0.001).

For each reason endorsed by informants we also asked whether they considered it an 'important' or 'not important' reason for their drinking. It should be noted that the term 'important', which was not defined by us, may not have been consistently interpreted by all informants. Given the very limited ability of most informants to accurately analyse and report their reasons for drinking, it is difficult to see how such ambiguities in meaning can be avoided using a standardised survey approach. The proportions of male and female drinkers endorsing each reason who say it is 'important' or 'not important' are given in Table 8.2. The reasons have been listed in the same order as before ie. descending frequency of endorsement by male drinkers.

It is clear from the table that those reasons most frequently endorsed are not necessarily those reasons most likely to be considered as important. Amongst women, the reason most frequently endorsed (drinking 'to celebrate') is also the reason most likely to be cited as 'important' by those endorsing it. Amongst men, however, the 'importance ratio' is highest for drinking 'because I enjoy the taste', even though the overall endorsement frequency is again highest for drinking 'to celebrate'.

Table 8.2 The relative importance of each reason for drinking to those male and female drinkers who endorse it

Reason for drinking		Male drinkers				Female drinkers			
		Important reason	Not important reason	All endorsing reason	*Base*	Important reason	Not important reason	All endorsing reason	*Base*
I drink when I want to celebrate something	%	60	40	100	*1152.3*	56	44	100	*1281.0*
I drink to be sociable	%	52	48	100	*1007.2*	40	60	100	*948.8*
I drink because I find it refreshing	%	58	42	100	*1004.8*	39	61	100	*494.4*
I drink because I enjoy the taste of it	%	63	37	100	*792.8*	40	60	100	*441.7*
I drink because it's the polite thing to do in certain situations	%	43	57	100	*600.3*	39	61	100	*684.8*
I drink to help myself relax	%	53	47	100	*520.6*	42	58	100	*345.7*
I drink because it makes me feel good	%	41	59	100	*387.3*	34	66	100	*235.0*
I drink because it goes well with meals	%	42	48	100	*371.0*	34	66	100	*388.3*
I drink to cheer myself up	%	39	61	100	*334.6*	33	67	100	*228.5*
I drink because the people I know drink	%	41	59	100	*324.3*	26	74	100	*213.2*
I drink because it helps me feel at ease with people	%	43	57	100	*320.3*	48	52	100	*291.0*
I drink because it improves my appetite for food	%	43	57	100	*203.0*	29	71	100	*118.3*
I drink because it gives me confidence	%	39	61	100	*162.0*	47	53	100	*143.1*
I drink to forget my worries	%	43	57	100	*148.3*	49	51	100	*89.6*
I drink when I want to pull myself together	%	31	69	100	*83.0*	46	54	100	*79.8*

In general amongst men the relative importance of each reason follows the pattern of the endorsement rate. However, amongst women, apart from the first reason, it is some of the reasons with the lowest endorsement rates that tend to be those considered important. Drinking 'to forget my worries', 'because it helps me feel at ease with people', 'because it gives me confidence' and 'when I want to pull myself together', all have relatively high 'importance ratios'. Thus male drinkers who have endorsed 'enjoyment' and 'social' reasons for drinking will tend to regard them as most important while female drinkers who endorse 'escape' reasons will consider them as most important.

8.3 The proportions of regular and occasional drinkers who endorse each reason for drinking

We wanted to find out if there were any specific reasons which were more likely to be endorsed by either regular or occasional drinkers. It is clear, however, from Table 8.3 that all the reasons except for drinking because 'it's the polite thing to do' are more frequently endorsed by regular than occasional drinkers of both sexes. In fact, amongst women there is actually a higher proportion of occasional than regular drinkers endorsing this statement. (Amongst men there is no difference.) It should also be noted that the two 'social' reasons, 'to celebrate' and 'to be sociable', show a smaller difference in proportion between regular and occasional drinkers than all the other remaining reasons.

8.4 Derivation of the factors comprising motivation for drinking

The main purpose of asking informants whether or not they drank for specific reasons was in order to establish general areas of motivation for drinking. Although we have commented on the specific reasons in the previous sections the reliability of any individual reason is liable to be fairly low. However, a measure of general motivation based on several reasons for drinking is likely to be both more reliable and of greater practical value. Following previous researchers we have intuitively called certain reasons 'social', 'escape' or 'enjoyment' motives but we need evidence that the reasons will group together into these categories.

The factor analysis was carried out on a sample[1] of all drinkers rather than male and female drinkers separately so that we could see how men and women differed within a general framework of motivation for drinking. It could be argued that men and women may have totally different types of motivation for drinking but when Edwards et al carried out separate factor analyses they found that the factors derived were very similar for both sexes.

Full details of the actual factor analysis method are given in the annex to this chapter. In this section it is sufficient to say that we accepted a solution based on three factors. We found that the three factor solution did distinguish between psychological, social and enjoyment types of motivation and showed a close resemblance to the three clusters revealed by correlational analysis. Solutions giving a greater number of factors produced further factors that were not meaningful and which accounted for an extremely low proportion of the variance. Altogether the three factor solution accounted for 26.7% of the total variance.

In Table 8.4 we have given the distribution of factor loadings (ie. the correlation between each reason and each factor) for the three main factors. All those reasons which have a factor loading of 0.30 or more are in bold type as they represent reasons which are strongly associated with each factor.

The first factor, which we have called 'psychological affect' motivation for drinking, has highest loading on the three reasons: 'to cheer myself up', 'to give me confidence', and 'to forget my worries'. A further group of reasons, which had loading of at least Q.44 on this factor, also seems to relate to the use of alcohol for some sort of drug effect. It is clear that this factor is very close to Cahalan's 'escape' motivation and Edwards' 'ataractic' motivation. This factor can be regarded as the main type of motivation identified by the analysis as it accounts for the largest proportion of the variance (13.1% of the total variance).

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[1] *To avoid using weighted data we reduce the number of men and young persons so that we had the correct population proportions. See Appendix, p. 283.*

Table 8.3

Proportion of regular and occasional drinkers who endorse[1] each reason for drinking by sex

	Men		Women	
Reason for drinking	% of regular drinkers	% of occasional drinkers	% of regular drinkers	% of occasional drinkers
I drink when I want to celebrate something	78	64	81	74
I drink to be sociable	69	52	64	50
I drink because I find it refreshing	73	39	44	15
I drink because I enjoy the taste of it	60	23	41	11
I drink because it's the polite thing to do in certain situations	39	40	39	45
I drink to help myself relax	40	14	30	11
I drink because it makes me feel good	29	11	20	8
I drink because it goes well with meals	27	14	33	13
I drink to cheer myself up	26	9	20	8
I drink because the people I know drink	24	11	16	9
I drink because it helps me feel at ease with people	24	10	25	10
I drink because it improves my appetite for food	15	7	9	5
I drink because it gives me confidence	12	5	13	4
I drink to forget my worries	12	3	8	3
I drink when I want to pull myself together	6	3	6	3
Base (all regular drinkers, all occasional drinkers)	100 *1192.1*	100 *349.0*	100 *861.4*	100 *790.0*

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[1] *This includes all those who said it was a reason for their drinking whether it was an important or not important reason.*

We have labelled the second factor 'intrinsic enjoyment' motivation for drinking since the reasons which have the highest loadings indicate an actual liking for alcohol itself as opposed to drinking for a psychological benefit. Thus, the two main reasons contributing to the factor are 'enjoy the taste' and 'find it refreshing' followed by 'goes well with meals'. Two of the reasons assigned to this factor overlap with the previous factor. They are 'help myself relax' and 'makes me feel good'. However, they have much lower factor loadings on this factor than on the first factor and are fairly mild forms of using alcohol for a psychological effect. This second factor is very similar to the 'sophisticated' factor found by Edwards et al and to the 'enjoyment' reasons found by Cahalan. (It accounts for 8.7% of the total variance.)

The last factor obtained from the factor analysis we have defined as 'social obligation' motivation for drinking. This is because the reasons which have the highest loadings on it are 'it's the polite thing to do', 'to be sociable' and 'the people I know drink', which all convey the idea of drinking in response to social pressures. This is quite distinct from the other two factors as there are no sizeable factor loadings which overlap.

Table 8.4

The distribution of factor loadings of each reason with each factor

Reason for drinking	Factor 1 Psychological affect	Factor 2 Intrinsic enjoyment	Factor 3 Social obligation
I drink to help myself relax	**0.46**	**0.35**	0.03
I drink because I find it refreshing	0.08	**0.57**	0.10
I drink because it makes me feel good	**0.48**	**0.36**	0.08
I drink because it goes well with meals	0.05	**0.37**	0.21
I drink when I want to celebrate something	0.07	0.20	0.25
I drink because the people I know drink	0.18	0.19	**0.31**
I drink because I enjoy the taste of it	0.19	**0.58**	0.05
I drink to cheer myself up	**0.58**	0.25	0.07
I drink because it's the polite thing to do in certain situations	0.00	0.01	**0.46**
I drink to forget my worries	**0.57**	0.05	0.01
I drink because it gives me confidence	**0.57**	0.08	0.15
I drink to be sociable	0.12	0.14	**0.44**
I drink when I want to pull myself together	**0.43**	0.03	0.07
I drink because it improves my appetite for food	0.10	0.24	0.10
I drink because it helps me feel at ease with people	**0.48**	0.14	0.23
Proportion of total variance	13.1%	8.7%	4.9%

Factor loadings ⩾ 0.30 in **bold**

Again this factor is very similar to Edwards 'clubbable' factor and, as with his factor, we did not find that the reason 'to celebrate' had a high factor loading so that in this respect both the factor analyses differ from Cahalan's 'social' reasons group. This factor accounted for the smallest proportion of the variance (4.9% of the total variance).

To sum up we have identified three factors representing psychological affect, instrinsic enjoyment and social obligation motivations for drinking. As they are very similar to those found by Edwards we can be fairly satisfied about their reliability. Although both factor analyses accounted for approximately the same proportion of total variance (Edwards accounted for 24.1% and 25.3% for female and male motivation for drinking compared to our 26.7% for both sexes) the levels of variance explained are very low so that we are a long way from a comprehensive explanation of why people drink. Moreover, since factors can only be identified from sets of reasons included in the analysis it is possible that some types of motivation will have been excluded. However, since previous research has also revealed these three main types of motivation it is unlikely that any major area has been omitted.

In order to compare informants' motivation for drinking a score was calculated for each individual on each factor using regression weights derived from the factor analysis. The distribution of scores for each factor was then standardised (giving a mean of 0.00 and a standard deviation of 1.00) so that the relative position of any group of informants could be compared across all factors.

8.5 Motivation for drinking by current drinking behaviour

It is obviously important to know whether those who consume different amounts of alcohol are motivated differently and, in particular, whether the heaviest drinkers are characterised by any one type of motivation. In Table 8.5 and in Fig. 8(a) we have shown the mean scores on each factor by sex for occasional drinkers and regular drinkers; the latter being subdivided into the usual categories according to the amount of alcohol consumed.

In the bottom row of the table we have given overall mean scores for each factor for all male and all female drinkers[1]. It is clear that, overall, men are much more strongly motivated to drink for intrinsic enjoyment reasons (Factor 2) than are women. The mean score on psychological affect motivation (Factor 1) is significantly higher for male than female drinkers but there is no difference between their mean scores for social obligation motivation (Factor 3). As we have frequently noted before, men are more likely both to be regular drinkers and to drink large quantities of alcohol than women so that it is possible that men's higher scores may be attributable to their higher rate of alcoholic consumption. However, when we compare men and women who consume equivalent quantities of alcohol (ie. those drinking 1-2, 3-5 and 6-10 units) we still find that men tend to be more motivated to drink for intrinsic enjoyment reasons than women. On the other hand, psychological affect motivation is stronger for women than men who drink comparable quantities of alcohol.

Looking at the relationship between factor scores and alcoholic consumption it is clear that for both sexes there is a trend showing higher scores for psychological affect and intrinsic enjoyment motivation the greater the amount of alcohol consumed. On the other hand, there is no such trend for the scores on social obligation motivation where there is a tendency for those in the middle ranges of alcohol consumption to have the highest scores.

The relative salience of each type of motivation for our heaviest drinkers (ie. those who consume 51 or more alcoholic units per week) can be investigated by comparing their mean scores on each factor. It can be seen that psychological affect and intrinsic enjoyment motivation are very important to this group but social obligation motivation is of minor importance. (Although psychological affect motivation has the highest mean score it is not significantly different from the score on intrinsic enjoyment motivation.)

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[1] *Some scores are negative as the overall mean on each factor was assigned the value of 0.00.*

Table 8.5 The distribution of mean scores on three factors of motivation for drinking by sex and current drinking behaviour

Number of alcoholic units per week	Men				Women			
	Factor 1 Psychological affect	Factor 2 Intrinsic enjoyment	Factor 3 Social obligation	*Base*	Factor 1 Psychological affect	Factor 2 Intrinsic enjoyment	Factor 3 Social obligation	*Base*
51+	0.82	0.68	0.02	*106.3*				
21-50	0.50	0.79	-0.02	*300.3*	0.74	0.30	0.03	*80.8*
11-20	0.25	0.60	0.21	*253.3*				
6-10	-0.03	0.44	0.04	*241.0*	0.28	0.16	0.04	*161.3*
3-5	-0.19	0.33	0.10	*159.0*	0.12	0.22	0.15	*261.6*
1-2	-0.35	0.00	0.08	*132.3*	-0.17	-0.22	0.05	*357.7*
All regular drinkers	0.18	0.52	0.07	*1192.1*	0.09	0.04	0.08	*861.4*
Occasional drinkers	-0.25	-0.35	-0.19	*349.0*	-0.28	-0.68	-0.11	*783.2*
All drinkers	0.08	0.32	0.01	*1541.1*	-0.08	-0.30	-0.01	*1651.3*

Fig 8(a) Mean scores on the three factors of motivation for drinking by sex and current drinking behaviour

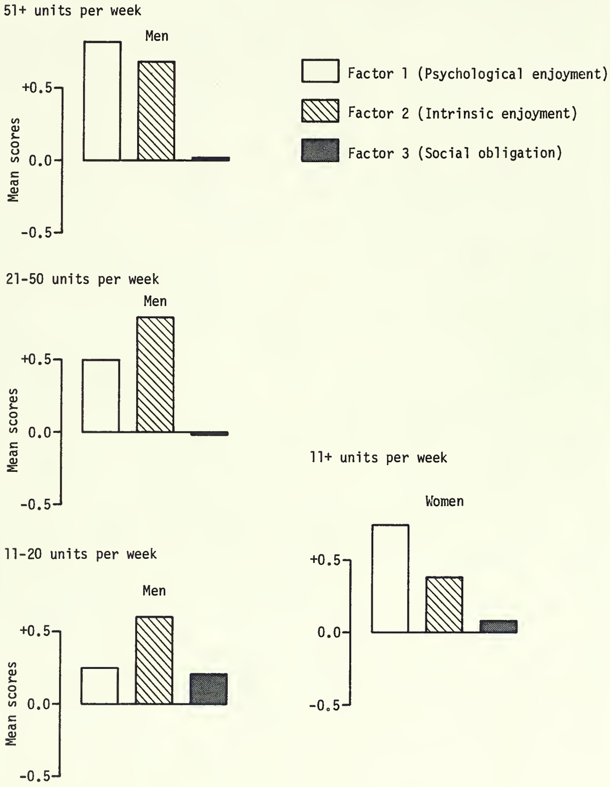
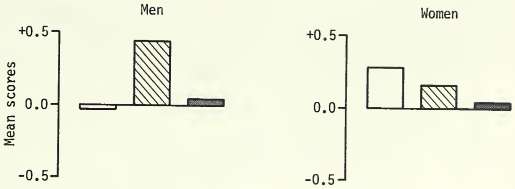
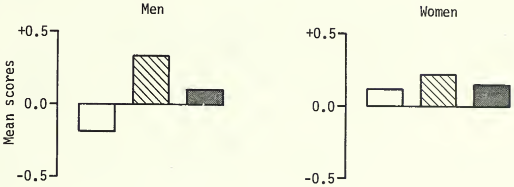


Fig 8(a) cont.

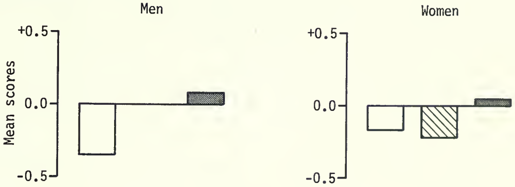
6-10 units per week



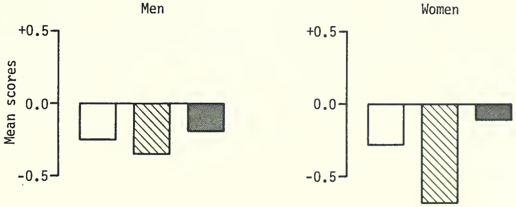
3-5 units per week



1-2 units per week



Occasional drinkers



On the other hand, if we look at women who consume the greatest quantities of alcohol (ie. 11 or more alcoholic units per week) it is clear that psychological affect motivation supersedes the other two types of motivation.

If we now compare our results with the previous research there is a broad area of consensus.* We have found that the heaviest drinkers in both sexes are characterised by a high level of psychological affect motivation and this is reinforced by the fact that there is a consistent rise in mean score with the rate of alcoholic consumption. Cahalan found that the proportion of 'escape' drinkers increased consistently the higher his drinking category. Edwards also found that 'ataractic' motivation was positively correlated with quantity consumed. Our results show that if men and women drink comparable amounts then women will tend to be more strongly motivated to drink for psychological affect reasons and Cahalan found that in his heavy drinking category women were more motivated than men to drink for 'escape' reasons. Our findings do differ however, from Edwards' results as he found that his sophisticated factor (equivalent to our intrinsic enjoyment factor) was more related to quantity consumed amongst women than the first factor, but it was not related to the rate of alcoholic consumption amongst men. However, neither our social obligation motivation nor Edwards' 'clubbable' factor of drinkers endorsing 'social' reasons increased at a much lower rate over his drinking categories (ie. from infrequent to heavy drinkers) compared to 'escape' reasons we can conclude that this type of motivation is of low importance to relatively heavy drinkers.

8.6 Motivation for drinking by age at the time of interview

In Table 8.6 and highlighted in Fig. 8(b) we have presented the mean scores on each factor for the three age groups, (17-30, 31-50 and over 50) by sex.

The most striking finding about the table is that all the factor scores tend to decrease with age at the time of interview. Thus younger people of both sexes are more highly motivated to drink for each of the three types of motivation than older people. The most salient motivation for male drinkers aged 17-30 is instrinsic enjoyment while for women of the same age group is is social obligation.

In considering the results of this table we should remember that younger informants tend to drink larger quantities of alcohol than older people so that some of the trends in motivation may be accounted for by differences in current drinking behaviour.

In order to investigate whether age at the time of interview has a separate relationship with motivation that cannot be explained by different levels of alcoholic consumption we have looked at the joint effects of these two variables. Therefore in Tables 8.7A and B we have given the mean scores on each factor for each of the three age groups subdivided according to current drinking behaviour. (To allow sufficient numbers for analysis we grouped up regular drinkers into categories of 1-5, 6-20 and 21 or more alcoholic units per week.)

Inspection of the tables shows the influence of age and rate of alcoholic consumption on motivation to be both separate and consistent. Thus, in general, whatever the amount of alcohol consumed, younger informants will have higher scores on each of the three factors. Similarly, those who consume the greatest amounts of alcohol in all age groups will have the highest scores on psychological affect and intrinsic enjoyment motivation but not on social obligation motivation which was not related to quantity consumed. In fact those men and women who consume relatively moderate amounts of alcohol for their sex (ie. up to 20 alcoholic units for men and up to 5 alcoholic units per week for women) tend to have the highest scores on social obligation motivation in all age groups which is consistent with out previous results.

Table 8.6 The distribution of mean scores on three factors of motivation for drinking by sex and age at the time of interview

Age at the time of interview	Men				Women			
	Factor 1 Psychological affect	Factor 2 Intrinsic enjoyment	Factor 3 Social obligation	*Base*	Factor 1 Psychological affect	Factor 2 Intrinsic enjoyment	Factor 3 Social obligation	*Base*
17-30	0.35	0.63	0.20	*431.1*	0.04	0.09	0.13	*456.7*
31-50	0.05	0.40	-0.01	*583.0*	-0.02	-0.34	0.03	*579.1*
51+	-0.10	0.00	-0.11	*527.0*	-0.23	-0.57	-0.14	*604.2*
Not answered	-	-	-	-	*	*	*	*4.6*
All drinkers	0.08	0.32	0.01	*1541.1*	-0.08	-0.30	-0.01	*1651.3*

* *Base is too small to give a reliable mean*

Fig 8(b) Mean scores on the three factors of motivation for drinking by sex and age at the time of interview

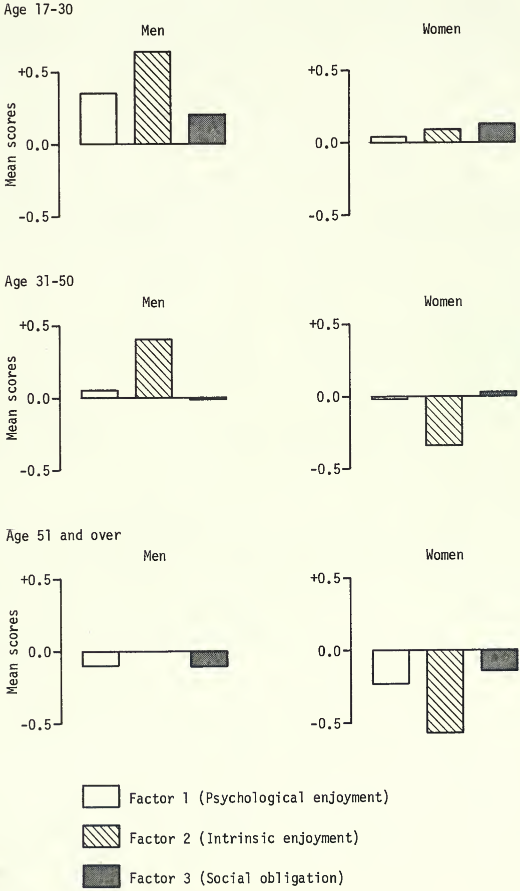


Table 8.7A Men The distribution of mean scores on three factors of motivation for drinking by sex, age and current drinking behaviour

Number of alcoholic units per week	Factor 1 Psychological affect			Factor 2 Intrinsic enjoyment			Factor 3 Social obligation					
	17-30	31-50	51+	17-30	31-50	51+	17-30	31-50	51+	*Base 17-30*	*Base 31-50*	*Base 51+*
21+	0.81	0.44	0.39	0.86	0.75	0.57	0.06	-0.08	-0.02	*169.6*	*162.0*	*75.0*
6-20	0.18	0.11	0.05	0.75	0.47	0.36	0.30	0.08	0.02	*147.3*	*207.0*	*140.0*
1-5	-0.29	-0.28	-0.23	0.27	0.33	-0.01	0.28	0.05	0.03	*61.3*	*110.0*	*120.0*
All regular drinkers	0.39	0.13	0.03	0.72	0.53	0.28	0.19	0.02	0.02	*378.1*	*479.0*	*335.0*
Occasional drinkers	0.06	-0.31	-0.32	-0.05	-0.23	-0.50	0.26	-0.16	-0.35	*53.0*	*104.0*	*192.0*
All drinkers	0.35	0.05	-0.10	0.63	0.40	0.00	0.20	-0.01	-0.11	*431.1*	*583.0*	*527.0*

Table 8.7B Women The distribution of mean scores on three factors of motivation for drinking by sex, age and current drinking behaviour

Number of alcoholic units per week	Factor 1 Psychological affect			Factor 2 Intrinsic enjoyment			Factor 3 Social obligation					
	17-30	31-50	51+	17-30	31-50	51+	17-30	31-50	51+	*Base 17-30*	*Base 31-50*	*Base 51+*
6+	0.47	0.27	0.56	0.44	-0.08	0.23	0.18	-0.03	-0.14	*116.7*	*73.0*	*52.4*
1-5	0.00	0.08	-0.23	0.32	-0.04	-0.35	0.29	0.06	-0.03	*179.3*	*246.2*	*191.5*
All regular drinkers	0.18	0.12	-0.06	0.37	-0.05	-0.23	0.25	0.04	-0.05	*296.0*	*319.2*	*244.0*
Occasional drinkers	-0.22	-0.19	-0.34	-0.43	-0.69	-0.80	-0.08	0.03	-0.20	*160.8*	*259.9*	*367.1*
All drinkers	0.04	-0.02	-0.23	0.09	-0.34	-0.57	0.13	0.03	-0.14	*456.8*	*579.1*	*611.1*

8.7 Motivation for drinking by social class of Head of Household

Social class is usually considered to be a good indicator of life style so that it seemed highly relevant to examine any differences in motivation for drinking by social class.

In Table 8.8 we have given the mean scores on each factor for the five social classes. The table for men shows that there are no consistent trends in scores on any of the factors by social class as such but there are certain outstanding relationships between particular social classes and particular factors. The most dramatic finding is that those who are employed in Professional occupations are very likely to be motivated to drink for intrinsic enjoyment reasons (mean score on Factor 2 = 1.08). Members of this social class may be involved in more entertaining, business lunches, holidays abroad etc. and so have more opportunity of experimenting with and developing the taste for alcoholic beverages.

On the other hand, it is social class 5, the Semi and unskilled manual occupations, which is the only group to have an above average score on psychological affect motivation (mean score = 0.21 compared to 0.08 for all male drinkers).

Finally, if we look at social obligation motivation there is some evidence of a trend with social classes 1 and 2 having above average scores and social classes 4 and 5 having below average scores.

Amongst women we also find an exceptionally high score for those whose Heads of Household have Professional occupations on intrinsic enjoyment motivation (mean score = 0.52). Moreover, there is evidence of a trend showing that a higher score on intrinsic enjoyment motivation is associated with movement up the social class scale (ie. from social class 5 to social class 1). Similarly, for social obligation motivation there is a steady increase in score in the same direction. However, there is no general relationship between social class and psychological affect motivation, although it should be noted that the Professional occupations have a very low score.

To sum up, men and women belonging to the Professional social class are characterised by a very strong motivation to drink for intrinsic enjoyment reasons. The non-manual group as a whole are more likely that the manual group to be concerned with social obligation motivation. The only group for whom psychological affect motivation is salient is men who have Semi or unskilled manual occupations.

8.8 Motivation for drinking by income of Head of Household

We looked at the relationship between the factor scores and other social and demographic variables such as area of residence, religious affiliation, smoking habits etc. but the only variable which we found to be associated with the factor scores was income of the Head of Household.

In Table 8.9 it can be seen that amongst both men and women the higher the income of the Head of Household the higher tends to be the score on intrinsic enjoyment motivation. This is consistent with out findings for social class where we found that the Professional class was characterised by high intrinsic enjoyment motivation and we would expect this class to have the highest income. There is no general relationship between income and psychological affect motivation but it should be noted that men whose net income is £10 a week or less have an exceptionally high score on this factor (mean score 0.47). (Given the low income of this group it is possible tha t they will tend to be pensioners for whom drinking may be their main source of relaxation.) Moreover, it is the most dominant type of motivation for this group whereas all other income groups amongst men have higher scores on intrinsic enjoyment motivation. Social obligation motivation shows no general relationship with income but those men and women whose Head of Household has an income of over £40 per week have exceptionally high scores on this factor.

Table 8.8 The distribution of mean scores on three factors of motivation for drinking by sex and social class of the Head of Household

Social class of the Head of Household	Men				Women			
	Factor 1 Psychological affect	Factor 2 Intrinsic enjoyment	Factor 3 Social obligation	*Base*	Factor 1 Psychological affect	Factor 2 Intrinsic enjoyment	Factor 3 Social obligation	*Base*
Professional (1)	-0.09	1.08	0.21	*69.0*	-0.30	0.52	0.28	*94.2*
Intermediate (2)	-0.04	0.39	0.21	*259.0*	0.10	-0.16	0.18	*260.6*
Other non-manual (3)	0.04	0.23	0.01	*171.0*	-0.22	-0.27	0.10	*244.0*
Skilled manual (4)	0.06	0.27	-0.03	*615.0*	-0.14	-0.38	-0.06	*563.3*
Semi-and unskilled manual (5)	0.21	0.23	-0.10	*358.3*	0.05	-0.49	-0.11	*270.8*
Housewife	0.75	0.57	-0.01	*39.8*	-0.09	-0.58	-0.29	*171.0*
Not answered	*	*	*	*27.0*	0.06	0.12	-0.03	*43.0*
All drinkers	0.08	0.32	0.01	*1541.0*	-0.08	-0.30	-0.01	*1651.3*

* *Base is too small to give a reliable mean.*

Table 8.9 The distribution of mean scores on three factors of motivation for drinking by sex and income of Head of Household

Income of Head of Household	Men				Women			
	Factor 1 Psychological affect	Factor 2 Intrinsic enjoyment	Factor 3 Social obligation	*Base*	Factor 1 Psychological affect	Factor 2 Intrinsic enjoyment	Factor 3 Social obligation	*Base*
Over £40	0.03	0.72	0.17	*207.0*	0.07	0.19	0.35	*146.6*
Over £30 to £40	-0.04	0.49	0.04	*235.0*	-0.26	-0.03	0.02	*184.4*
Over £25 to £30	0.09	0.31	-0.03	*275.0*	0.08	-0.32	0.00	*262.9*
Over £20 to £25	0.07	0.20	0.06	*286.0*	-0.12	-0.32	0.08	*250.8*
Over £15 to £20	-0.03	0.08	-0.04	*190.0*	-0.20	-0.36	-0.08	*202.0*
Over £10 to £15	0.11	0.01	-0.34	*132.6*	-0.03	-0.45	-0.01	*171.7*
Up to £10	0.47	0.20	0.04	*127.6*	-0.08	-0.58	-0.12	*267.8*
Don't know	0.22	0.54	-0.03	*60.0*	-0.10	-0.26	-0.17	*116.3*
Refused	*	*	*	*24.0*	-0.23	-0.41	-0.41	*39.8*
Not answered	*	*	*	*4.0*	*	*	*	*9.1*
All drinkers	0.08	0.32	0.01	*1541.1*	-0.08	-0.30	-0.01	*1651.3*

* *Base is too small to give a reliable mean.*

8.9 Summary

The two most popular reasons given for drinking are 'to celebrate' (endorsed by 75% and 78% of male and female drinkers respectively) and 'to be sociable' (endorsed by 65% and 58% respectively). Apart from these two 'social' reasons we did not find, as Cahalan did in his study of American drinking habits, that 'social' reasons are generally more frequently endorsed than other reasons.

Overall, men tend to give more reasons for drinking than women do and this is probably because men tend to drink both on more occasions and for longer periods than women. There are two reasons which show an exceptionally large disparity between male and female rates of endorsement: drinking because 'I find it refreshing' (endorsed by 65% of male drinkers compared with 30% of female drinkers) and drinking because 'I enjoy the taste' (endorsed by 51% and 27% respectively).

A much higher proportion of regular than occasional drinkers reported that they drank for each of the reasons listed with the exception of drinking because 'it's the polite thing to do'. For women a slightly higher proportion of occasional than regular drinkers endorsed this reason while for men there was no difference between the two groups.

A factor analysis of the reasons revealed that there were three main types of motivation for drinking. We have interpreted these as 'psychological affect' (ie. using alcohol for a drug effect), 'intrinsic enjoyment' (ie. actual enjoyment of the beverage itself) and 'social obligation' (ie. drinking in response to social pressures). The reliability of these three types of motivation is confirmed by their close resemblance to the three factors (ataractic, sophisticated and clubbable) obtained by Edwards et al in their study of drinking in a London suburb. Furthermore, Cahalan et al identified two main groups of reasons for drinking, 'escape' (equivalent to our psychological affect factor) and 'social' (equivalent to our social obligation factor) but placed the two remaining enjoyment reasons into a 'miscellaneous' category which we, in common with Edwards et al, found to represent a third type of motivation (ie. intrinsic enjoyment).

We have found that, overall, men are more strongly motivated to drink for intrinsic enjoyment and psychological affect reasons than women but that there is no difference between the sexes in social obligation motivation. However when we compared men and women who drank equivalent quantities of alcohol we found that women tended to be more strongly motivated than men to drink for psychological affect reasons, although men were consistently more likely to be motivated for intrinsic enjoyment reasons. In so far as psychological affect motivation implies psychological dependence upon alcohol the results seem to suggest that women who drink equivalent quantities of alcohol to men may be more dependent on alcohol. It must be remembered, of course, that the maximum number of alcoholic units consumed by women is 44 so that by our definition (ie. 51 or more alcoholic units per week) there are no heavy drinkers. However, in view of the increasing rates of consumption amongst women, their higher scores on this type of motivation may assume more importance.

Amongst both sexes we have found that psychological effect and intrinsic enjoyment motivation increase with the rate of alcoholic consumption but social obligation motivation is highest amongst those men and women who drink moderately. The most salient type of motivation for the heaviest drinkers amongst men and women is psychological affect although for men intrinsic enjoyment is almost as important.

Our results concerning the main social and demographic relationships with motivation for drinking show firstly that the younger the informant the more salient will be each type of motivation. This relationship is consistently maintained whatever the rate of alcoholic consumption. Men aged 17-30 tend to be most strongly motivated by intrinsic enjoyment reasons while women of the same age group are most concerned with reasons connected with social obligation. The most outstanding relationship with social class is that those men and women in the Professional class are characterised by a very strong motivation to drink for intrinsic enjoyment reasons. The non-manual group as a whole tends to be more concerned with social obligation motivation than the manual group. The only social class containing a higher than average score on psychological affect motivation is men following Semi-skilled or unskilled manual occupations.

Annex: Description of the factor analysis method used for motivation for drinking

The purpose of this annex is to explain the method used in obtaining the factors for motivation for drinking and the subsequent calculation of the factor scores which we have used for comparing different groups of informants.

The criteria used in selecting certain reasons for drinking for presentation to informants have already been explained. It was necessary, however, to carry out a preliminary correlational analysis to investigate how the reasons clustered together. In calculating the correlations each reason was represented as a simple dichotomy according to whether or not informants drank for that reason. We did not take into account informants' views on the importance of each reason for their own drinking as we felt that this represented a logically distinct dimension of motivation.

Complications can arise from using weighted data both to calculate correlations and in the actual factor analysis. We therefore selected an unweighted sample of our informants which nevertheless reflected the correct population proportions. A 'representative' sample was drawn up comprising all women and 1 in 2.28 men (discarded systematically) from the main sample and all young persons with female Heads of Household and 1 in 2.28 young persons with male Heads of Household from the supplementary sample. Since the questions on reasons for drinking only applied to those who drank, all non-drinkers were then excluded leaving a sample size of 1391 which is sufficiently large for reliable results to be obtained.

The actual correlation matrix is shown in Table 8A where those reasons which are correlated highly with each other have been grouped into clusters. A particular reason is allocated to a particular cluster if its average correlation with other reasons in that cluster (ie $\bar{r}_{ij}$) is higher than its average correlation with reasons in other clusters. In Table 8B those reasons belonging to each cluster have been underlined. The 'α' coefficients for each cluster are 0.75, 0.56 and 0.47 respectively. It is clear that there is some overlapping of clusters - in particular items 1 and 3 which although belonging to cluster 1 have fairly high average correlations with cluster 2.

Having established that there were three fairly meaningful clusters we decided to carry out a factor analysis specifying results for solutions with between two and five factors. A principal factors program using Varimax rotation was used as we wished to obtain orthogonal (ie. uncorrelated) factors.

The two factor solution was rejected as the second factor which comprised items from clusters 2 and 3 was not interpretable. On the other hand, the three factor solution produced factors which corresponded closely to the clusters. In Table 8B it can be seen that those reasons which contribute highly to the factors (ie. have factor loadings $\geqslant$ 0.30) are also those which define the clusters. Moreover, each factor accounted for a worthwhile proportion of the total variance; 13.1%, 8.7% and 4.1% for Factors 1-3 respectively, whereas the four and five factor solutions produced extra factors which explained very little of the total variance and were, in any case, not meaningful. The final reason for accepting the three factor solution was that our three factors, psychological affect, intrinsic enjoyment and social obligation, corresponded very closely with the three factors obtained by Edwards[1].

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[1] *A comparison of female and male motivation for drinking - Edwards, Hersman & Peto. The International Journal of the Addictions 8(4) pp.577-581.*

Table 8A Correlation Matrix of reasons for drinking

I drink to cheer myself up	8																
I drink because it gives me confidence	11	**34**															
I drink to forget my worries	10	**42**	**31**														
I drink because it helps me feel at ease with people	15	**31**	**42**	**24**													Cluster 1 (Psychological affect)
I drink because it makes me feel good	3	**43**	**33**	**24**	**32**												
I drink to help myself relax	1	**36**	**30**	**26**	**32**	**39**											
I drink when I want to pull myself together	13	**25**	**28**	**35**	17	17	19										
I drink because I enjoy the taste	7	**28**	17	14	16	**33**	**26**	13									
I drink because I find it refreshing	2	19	09	07	13	**25**	**25**	06	**45**								Cluster 2 (Intrinsic enjoyment)
I drink because it goes well with meals	4	11	09	06	13	13	**20**	07	**24**	**21**							
I drink because it improves my appetite for food	14	13	07	09	13	09	10	12	13	14	**29**						
I drink because it's the polite thing to do in certain situations	9	07	05	00	08	04	01	05	00	06	12	05					
I drink to be sociable	12	12	14	08	**20**	14	14	17	15	15	13	03	**28**				Cluster 3 (Social Obligation)
I drink because the people I know drink	6	17	16	14	17	**21**	09	13	18	19	12	09	18	19			
I drink when I want to celebrate something	5	13	09	05	12	13	14	02	14	14	15	04	14	15	11		
		8	11	10	15	3	1	13	7	2	4	14	9	12	6	5	

Correlations ≥ 0.20 in **bold**

Table 8B Comparison of factor loadings with clusters

Reason for drinking	Varimax Factor loadings			$\bar{r}_{ij}$		
	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3
1 I drink to help myself relax	**0.46**	0.34	0.03	0.30	0.20	0.09
2 I drink because I find it refreshing	0.08	**0.56**	0.10	0.15	0.27	0.12
3 I drink because it makes me feel good	**0.48**	0.36	0.08	0.31	0.20	0.13
4 I drink because it goes well with meals	0.05	**0.37**	0.21	0.11	0.25	0.13
5 I drink when I want to celebrate something	0.06	0.20	0.24	0.10	0.12	0.13
6 I drink because people I know drink	0.18	0.19	**0.31**	0.15	0.14	0.16
7 I drink because I enjoy the taste of it	0.18	**0.58**	0.05	0.21	0.27	0.12
8 I drink to cheer myself up	**0.58**	0.25	0.06	0.35	0.18	0.12
9 I drink because it's the polite thing to do in certain situations	0.00	0.01	**0.46**	0.04	0.08	0.20
10 I drink to forget my worries	**0.56**	0.05	0.01	0.30	0.14	0.14
11 I drink because it gives me confidence	**0.57**	0.08	0.14	0.33	0.10	0.11
12 I drink to be sociable	0.12	0.14	**0.44**	0.14	0.12	0.21
13 I drink when I want to pull myself together	**0.44**	0.03	0.06	0.24	0.10	0.09
14 I drink because it improves my appetite for food	0.10	0.24	0.10	0.10	0.19	0.05
15 I drink because it helps me feel at ease with people	**0.48**	0.14	0.22	0.30	0.14	0.14

$\bar{r}_{ij}$= *Average of correlations of each item with items in clusters 1, 2 and 3*
Factor loading ⩾ 0.30 in **bold**
——*Denotes item belongs to cluster given by heading*

It may be asked why factor scores were used rather than composite scores derived directly from items constituting particular clusters. The factors have the advantage of reflecting the correlational pattern more accurately in that a differential weight is attached to each reason whereas if composite scores had been derived then equal weight would have been given to each reason making up the cluster. Furthermore, those reasons which tend to overlap can be included in more than one factor but clusters, defined in any straightforward way, are mutually exclusive.

In order to obtain factor scores a regression weight has to be calculated which gives the actual contribution of each reason to each factor. Scores were obtained for each informant in the total sample by multiplying his or her standardised score on each reason by its regression weight and summing over all reasons

9 General attitudes towards drinking, drunkenness and alcoholism

9.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with various aspects of public attitudes towards drinking behaviour. It covers attitudes to drinking in general, to drunkenness and to alcoholism, but excludes individuals' attitudes to their own drinking, which were covered in Chapters 7 and 8.

There are two main reasons for enquiring into drinking attitudes, as well as drinking behaviour, in a survey of this kind. In the first place, the relationship between the attitudes and the behaviour of individuals is clearly a key issue for health educators, who necessarily rely heavily upon influencing personal habits through attitudes. As we have stated before, survey evidence cannot definitely establish the nature of any causal relationship that might exist between attitudes and behaviour, eg. it is likely that those most in favour of drinking are also those who drink the greatest quantities but it is not possible to ascertain which is cause and which is effect. However, it seems most plausible to suppose that attitudes and behaviour reinforce each other and form a system which sustains drinking habits on both an individual and a social level. In the second place, health education communications, even though often intended to influence particular types of individual, necessarily interact with and function in the context of public opinion. Hence the design of effective communications requires a good understanding of the structure and intensity of public attitudes to relevant topics, both generally and within particular sections of the population.

We decided to concentrate this part of the enquiry on three main topics, namely, attitudes towards drinking in general, drunkenness and alcoholism. In measuring attitudes towards such topics it is generally accepted that more valid and usable results can be obtained by presenting a series of attitude statements with which informants can either agree or disagree than by asking open questions about their views on drinking, drunkenness etc. Open questions did, however, prove useful in our exploratory work which was aimed at eliciting expressions of attitude from which statements for standardised presentation could be derived. We finally adopted two lists of statements which incorporated the main themes brought out by the open approach and some statements which were felt to be important from a health education point of view eg. attitudes towards children drinking, drinking and driving, whether public money should be spent on treating alcoholics. The first set of statements (Q.8) consists of attitudes towards drinking as such while the second set of statements comprises attitudes towards drunkenness (Q.30 Items 1-8 and 15) and attitudes towards alcoholics (Q.30 Items 9-14 inclusive) which, for convenience, were grouped together.

In the first part of this chapter (Sections 9.2 - 9.4) we shall be looking at the overall extent of agreement and disagreement with each of the attitude statements. Any major differences in attitude between men and women and those who consume different quantities of alcohol will be noted.

In the second part of the chapter (Section 9.5 onwards) we have carried out a factor analysis of all the statements to ascertain whether any basic underlying attitudes towards the whole spectrum of drinking behaviour can be identified and measured. We wanted to know if informants saw the three areas of drinking, drunkenness and alcoholism as quite distinct or whether their main attitudes cut across these areas and were, in fact, based on a general dimension of approval/disapproval of all types of drinking behaviour. Finally we shall be relating informants' scores on the factors obtained both to their own drinking behaviour and to their social background.

9.2 The reactions of men and women to statements about drinking

Each statement about drinking given in Q.8 basically represents either an 'anti'-drinking attitude (conveying undesirable/immoral, even harmful, aspects of drinking) or 'pro'-drinking attitude (conveying pleasurable/sociable/exciting aspects of drinking).

We have shown the proportions of men and women who agree or disagree with the 'anti'-drinking statements in Table 9.1A and the 'pro'-drinking statements in Table 9.1B[1]. Both sets of statements have been listed in the order of male frequency of agreement.

It is clear from Table 9.1A that majorities of men and women agree with all the 'anti'-drinking statements except for the last two listed. The penultimate statement 'drink usually brings out the worst in people', although not supported by a majority still has a higher proportion of informants agreeing rather than disagreeing with it. However the final statement, 'it's degrading for women to be seen drinking in public houses', is not accepted by a majority of men whereas a higher proportion of women agree rather than disagree with it. Thus women are much more likely than men to voice disapproval of members of their own sex drinking in public houses. In fact, women seem to generally view drinking more negatively than men since higher proportions of them endorse 'anti'-drinking statements.

From the table it can be seen that almost unanimous support is given to the view that 'people who drink and drive should be punished more severely'. This statement rather invites informants to give the socially acceptable answer because of the amount of publicity given to the dangers of drinking and driving but, nevertheless, it is clear that there would be widespread approval for stiffer penalties for drinking and driving offences.

There are two further statements which may be of particular interest to health educators. Firstly, 75% of men and 85% of women believe that 'children and young people should be discouraged from taking up drinking'. Secondly, 70% of men and 80% of women agree that 'drink costs more money than the pleasure is worth', despite the fact that 96% of men and 88% of women themselves drink.

We looked at the relationship between current drinking behaviour and agreement with 'anti'-drinking statements and, as expected, we found that the greater the amount of alcohol consumed the less support for these views. However, even amongst male regular drinkers majorities agreed with the first five statements listed in the table and amongst female regular drinkers majority agreement was also found with the sixth statement. Thus there is widespread acceptance of 'anti'-drinking views even amongst those who drink regularly.

Turning now to the 'pro'-drinking statements it can be seen from Table 9.1B that there is also widespread acceptance of 'pro'-drinking views. All the statements except for the final one listed are supported by majorities of men and women. Even this last statement 'life would be very dull if one couldn't drink', which shows the strongest commitment towards drinking, is endorsed by 44% of men and 32% of women. It is clear that men are more likely than women to agree with all of the 'pro'-drinking statements which ties in with the previous finding that women were more likely to accept the 'anti'-drinking statements. In particular men are considerably more likely than women to agree that 'having a drink is one of the pleasures in life'. (The difference in proportions of men and women endorsing this view is 22% which is much higher than for any of the other statements.) It is also worth noting the very high proportions (86% of men, 73% of women) who agree that 'having a drink with someone is a way of being friendly' so that it is clear that drinking is fulfilling an important social function for many people.

As we would expect the proportions who agree with the 'pro'-drinking statements increase the greater the amount of alcohol consumed. We still find, however, that majorities of both male and female non-drinkers agree that 'there is nothing wrong in having a few

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[1] *The statements were phrased in a deliberately provocative manner to maximise the proportions agreeing and disagreeing. Statements expressing an 'anti'-drinking or 'pro'-drinking attitude were mixed up in order to obtain a reasonably balanced set.*

Table 9.1A Proportions of men and women who agree or disagree with 'anti'-drinking statements

'Anti'-drinking statements		Men					Women				
		Agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Total	*Base*	Agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Total	*Base*
People who drink and drive should be punished more severely	%	92	4	4	100	*1618.1*	98	1	2	100	*1886.9*
Drink is a cause of many unhappy marriages	%	82	9	8	100	*1618.1*	88	5	7	100	*1886.9*
Children and young people should be discouraged from taking up drinking	%	75	16	8	100	*1618.1*	85	11	4	100	*1886.9*
Drink costs more money than the pleasure is worth	%	70	20	10	100	*1618.1*	80	12	8	100	*1886.9*
Drink is one of the main causes of immoral behaviour	%	65	25	10	100	*1618.1*	76	16	8	100	*1886.9*
People who spend a lot of time in public houses soon end up in trouble	%	53	36	11	100	*1618.1*	62	27	11	100	*1886.9*
Drinking usually brings out the worst in people	%	47	37	16	100	*1618.1*	49	32	19	100	*1886.9*
It's degrading for women to be seen drinking in public houses	%	39	53	8	100	*1618.1*	49	44	7	100	*1886.9*

Table 9.1B Proportions of men and women who agree or disagree with 'pro'-drinking statements

'Pro'-drinking statements		Men					Women				
		Agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Total	*Base*	Agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Total	*Base*
There is nothing wrong in having a few drinks	%	93	3	4	100	*1618.1*	87	8	5	100	*1886.9*
A drink makes many people more sociable	%	87	8	5	100	*1618.1*	82	12	6	100	*1886.9*
Having a drink with someone is a way of being friendly	%	86	8	6	100	*1618.1*	73	16	11	100	*1886.9*
Having a drink is one of the pleasures in life	%	79	13	8	100	*1618.1*	57	30	13	100	*1886.9*
Life would be very dull if one couldn't drink	%	44	46	9	100	*1618.1*	32	57	11	100	*1886.9*

drinks' and that 'a drink makes many people more sociable'. (Amongst male non-drinkers only there is also a majority supporting the view that 'having a drink with someone is a way of being friendly'.)

To sum up, it is evident that many men and women have ambivalent attitudes towards drinking since majorities support both 'anti'-drinking and 'pro'-drinking views. Overall women are more inclined to endorse 'anti'-drinking views and less inclined to accept 'pro'-drinking views than men.

9.3 The reactions of men and women to statements about drunkenness

In Table 9.2 we have given the proportions of men and women who agree or disagree with particular 'anti'-drunkenness views (A) and 'pro'-drunkenness views (B). The term 'pro'-drunkenness is perhaps rather strong as the statements simply convey the idea of benefits either to the person involved or to others of being intoxicated (eg. people who are drunk can be very amusing).

From the top half of the table it can be seen that majorities of men and women agree with all the 'anti'-drunkenness sentiments expressed in the statements. Greater disapproval of drunkenness by women than by men is shown in the higher proportions of women endorsing these statements. The only exception to this general finding is provided by the first statement, 'a drunken woman is a far worse sight than a drunken man', which is endorsed by equally high proportions of men and of women. It seems, therefore, that men are more likely to be in favour of women drinking but when it comes to drunkenness they are as hostile as women themselves to the sight of a drunken woman. The two most prevalent 'anti'-drunkenness views are that 'a drunken person is a disgusting sight' and that 'it is embarrassing to see someone you know get drunk'.

It is important to note that even amongst regular drinkers there is considerable support for the 'anti'-drunkenness statements. Amongst female regular drinkers majorities agree with each of the statements given. Majorities of male regular drinkers also agree with the statements with the exception of the last one where there is still a large element of agreement (45% agree that they 'would feel ashamed if anyone in their family got drunk').

Turning to the 'pro'-drunkenness statements it is clear that most men and women do feel that 'people who are drunk can be very amusing' (more strongly believed by men). There is also agreement by the majority of men and women that 'people are often more honest drunk than sober'. However, men and women differ in that the majority of men agree that 'it does some people good to get drunk once in a while' whereas the majority of women disagree with this statement. Differences between men and women are also shown in the former's tendency to agree and the latter's tendency to disagree with the view that 'drinking is a good way of forgetting your troubles for a while'.

All these 'pro'-drunkenness statements were endorsed more frequently by regular than occasional or non-drinkers. In fact, male regular drinkers are the only group which contains majorities supporting the last two statements (61% and 50% agree with the penultimate and ultimate statements respectively).

To conclude, there is considerable antipathy towards drunkenness amongst drinkers as well as non-drinkers of both sexes. The first two 'pro'-drunkenness statements are basically salutary observations about people who are drunk but are not really advocating drunkenness. However, the last two statements suggest drunkenness as a means of psychological escape and although this idea is generally rejected we do find majorities of male regular drinkers supporting it.

9.4 The reactions of men and women to statements about alcoholics

In Table 9.3 we have presented the proportions of men and women who agree or disagree with particular statements about alcoholics. All the statements except the last convey the notion that alcoholics can't be helped and that it is largely their own fault[1].

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[1] *The overwhelming negative bias of the statements reflects the difficulty of expressing positive sentiments about alcoholics.*

Table 9.2 Proportions of men and women who agree or disagree with 'anti'-drunkenness and 'pro'-drunkenness statements

		Men					Women				
A. 'Anti'-drunkenness statements		Agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Total	*Base†*	Agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Total	*Base††*
A drunken women is a far worse sight than a drunken man	%	91	5	4	100	*1593.1*	93	5	3	100	*1848.1*
A drunken person is a disgusting sight	%	74	17	9	100	*1593.1*	86	8	6	100	*1848.1*
It's embarrassing to see someone you know get drunk	%	63	27	10	100	*1593.1*	83	13	5	100	*1848.1*
A person who gets drunk in public has no self respect	%	55	35	10	100	*1593.1*	70	22	8	100	*1848.1*
I would feel ashamed if anyone in my family got drunk	%	50	40	10	100	*1593.1*	70	21	8	100	*1848.1*
B. 'Pro'-drunkenness statements											
People who are drunk can be very amusing	%	75	18	7	100	*1593.1*	57	36	7	100	*1848.1*
People are often more honest drunk than sober	%	62	23	14	100	*1593.1*	58	23	19	100	*1848.1*
It does some people good to get drunk once in a while	%	56	37	6	100	*1593.1*	39	52	9	100	*1848.1*
Getting drunk is a good way of forgetting your troubles for a while	%	48	43	9	100	*1593.1*	38	50	12	100	*1848.1*

† *Base excludes 25.0 men who did not understand the term 'alcoholic'*
†† *Base excludes 38.8 women who did not understand the term 'alcoholic'*

Table 9.3 Proportions of men and women who agree or disagree with statements about alcoholics

Statements about alcoholics		Men					Women				
		Agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Total	*Base*†	Agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Total	*Base*††
People who become alcoholic have only themselves to blame	%	51	41	8	100	*1593.1*	42	45	12	100	*1848.1*
The earlier in life a person starts drinking alcohol the more likely that person is to become an alcoholic	%	42	46	11	100	*1593.1*	49	37	14	100	*1848.1*
Alcoholics can never reach the point where they stop drinking for good	%	29	52	19	100	*1593.1*	27	50	23	100	*1848.1*
Even if an alcoholic claims to be cured that person can never be trusted with a responsible job	%	26	62	12	100	*1593.1*	24	61	16	100	*1848.1*
Doctors shouldn't waste time on alcoholics when they could be curing people with real illnesses	%	21	72	6	100	*1593.1*	19	74	6	100	*1848.1*
Giving treatment to alcoholics is something well worth spending public money on	%	14	79	6	100	*1593.1*	14	78	8	100	*1848.1*

† *Base excludes 25.0 men who did not understand the term 'alcoholic'*
†† *Base excludes 38.8 women who did not understand the term 'alcoholic'*

It is evident that over three-quarters of men and women do *not* feel that 'treating alcoholics is something well worth spending public money on'. However, this answer may have been given because of the predominant financial overtones since only a slightly smaller proportion feel that doctors *should* spend time with alcoholics (ie. disagree that doctors shouldn't waste time on alcoholics). In fact the general impression given by their answers is that informants do believe alcoholics should be treated and given a second chance (62% of men and 61% of women believe that an alcoholic who claims to be cured can be trusted with a responsible job). Men seem to have a less charitable attitude towards alcoholism than women in that they are more likely to believe that 'people who become alcoholics have only themselves to blame'. On the other hand, women tend to be more fatalistic in that they are more likely to believe that 'the earlier the first drink the greater the chance of becoming an alcoholic'.

When we looked at the relationship between current drinking behaviour and views on the statements we found that there were no differences between occasional drinkers and non-drinkers but that regular drinkers were consistently more positive about the value of treatment and more hopeful about an alocholic's chance of recovery.

It can be concluded, therefore, that in general the public is receptive to the view that alcoholism can be arrested and that treatment is worthwhile. However, there is some concern about the cost of the treatment particularly when this is compared with other more 'acceptable' illnesses.

9.5 Derivation of the factors comprising the four main attitudes towards drinking

Although we were interested in informants' reactions to the particular statements our main aim was to see if there was an underlying structure of attitudes towards the whole spectrum of drinking behaviour. We wanted to find out whether informants viewed the three topics of drinking, drunkenness and alcoholism as quite distinct or whether they viewed drinking in a more general way as consistently positive or negative, irrespective of the particular topic considered. We decided, therefore, to carry out a factor analysis of the statements using a method[1] which would produce statistically independent factors.

The factor analysis distinguished four factors which can be taken to represent four separate attitudes towards drinking. These four factors are given in Table 9.4 together with their associated factor loadings (ie. the correlations between each factor and each statement). The factor loadings in bold type ($\geqslant 0.30$) show those statements which make a substantial contribution to each factor and on which its interpretation is based.

We have labelled the first factor 'moral disapproval of drinking' since statements with high loadings on this factor chiefly reflect negative attitudes towards drinking, particularly those with moral overtones (the highest loading is given for the statement, 'drinking is one of the main causes of immoral behaviour'). It should be noted that although this factor is predominantly concerned with drinking as such it also includes several anti-drunkenness statements so that it should be considered as a general factor reflecting negative attitudes.

Factor 2 has substantial loadings on all the 'pro'-drinking and 'pro'-drunkenness statements but, as the highest loadings are associated with the former, we have labelled this factor 'drinking is pleasurable'.

It is interesting to find that the analysis has identified two statistically independent factors rather than a single, undifferentiated factor embracing all 'pro'-drinking and 'anti'-drinking statements which would have indicated that informants view drinking in one dimension as either positive or negative. The existence of these two factors suggests that informants are capable of perceiving drinking simultaneously from two different points of view, eg. considering it as pleasurable but at the same time disapproving of it in moral terms (or vice-versa). The presence of this ambivalence is not in itself very surprising, but the analysis demonstrates that it is a very fundamental feature of public attitudes towards drinking which would need to be taken account of in framing health education communications.

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[1] *For details of this method see Annex to this chapter.*

In contrast to the two earlier factors, the third factor specifically relates only to the statements concerned with alcoholism. We have called this factor 'alcoholics can be helped' as the statements (taken in the negative form except for Item 13) convey this general impression.

Lastly, Factor 4 also represents an attitude specific to one aspect of drinking behaviour, namely drunkenness. It is interesting that both 'pro'- and 'anti'-drunkenness statements have high loadings on this factor so that there is evidence of a general dimension representing attitudes to drunkenness with high positive scorers being very 'anti'-drunkenness and high negative scorers being very 'pro'-drunkenness. The factor has been labelled 'disapproval of drunkenness' to be consistent with those who have high positive scores.

Altogether the four factor solution accounts for 32.4% of the total variance which is slightly better than our results on motivation for drinking where 26.7% of the total variance was accounted for by the three factors. Since there is still a large proportion of the variance unexplained we cannot say we have absolute proof that there are only four main attitudes towards drinking. Although we feel our items covered a very wide range of attitudes towards drinking it is possible that if other items had been included that further attitude dimensions would have been revealed. On the other hand, we can be fairly confident about the reliability of the results since we carried out the factor analysis on two random halves of the sample and the findings were replicated.

In order to compare informants' positions on these four main attitudes we calculated a factor score for each individual on each factor. These scores were then standardised (giving a mean of 0.00 and a standard deviation of 1.00) so that comparisons between factors could be made.

In the following sections (9.6 - 9.9) we shall examine how informants' basic attitudes towards drinking vary according to their actual drinking behaviour and to their social and demographic background.

9.6 The relationship between the four main attitudes towards drinking and current drinking behaviour

In Table 9.5 we have shown the mean scores[1] of men and women on each of the factors for every level of drinking behaviour including those who do not drink at all. In order to highlight the differences between our three main groups ie. regular, occasional and non-drinkers we have shown their mean scores in Fig.9(a) for men and women separately.

First of all, we shall look at the overall differences in attitudes towards drinking of men and women. By comparing the scores in the bottom row of Table 9.5 it can be seen that on Factors 1 and 4 women have significantly higher mean scores[1] than men. Thus women tend to be more disapproving both of drinking and of drunkenness than men. This is consistent with the results for Factor 2, drinking is pleasurable, where men as a whole have a significantly higher score than women indicating that they are more likely to see benefits in drinking. Lastly, Factor 4, alcoholics can be helped, shows a slightly (but significantly) higher score for women than men which suggests that women have a more sympathetic attitude towards alcoholics.

The differences in overall scores on the three factors concerned with drinking and drunkenness may be due to the fact that men tend to drink more than women and so to justify their behaviour will tend to be less disapproving and more likely to emphasize the pleasurable aspects of drinking. However, it can be seen that amongst male and female regular drinkers who consume equivalent amounts (ie. those who consume 1-2, 3-5 and 6-10 alcoholic units), women consistently tend to be more disapproving of both drinking and drunkenness than men since they have higher scores on Factors 1 and 4.

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[1] *As the overall mean for each factor was given the value 0.00 those with a high positive score will most strongly agree with the attitude expressed by the factor label.*

Table 9.4 Attitudes towards drinking, drunkenness and alcoholism - Factor loadings of each statement with each of the four factors

		Attitude statement	Factor 1 Moral dis-approval of drinking	Factor 2 Drinking is pleasurable	Factor 3 Alcoholics can be helped	Factor 4 Disapproval of drunkenness
ATTITUDES TO DRINKING	1	A drink makes many people more sociable	0.12	**0.49**	0.14	-0.04
	2	Drinking costs more money than the pleasure is worth	**0.45**	-0.21	-0.10	0.06
	3	Drink is one of the main causes of immoral behaviour	**0.53**	**–0.06**	-0.11	0.10
	4	Having a drink is one of the pleasures in life	-0.26	**0.62**	0.02	-0.04
	5	Children and young people should be discouraged from taking up drinking	**0.44**	-0.11	-0.12	0.12
	6	It's degrading for women to be seen drinking in public houses	**0.44**	-0.24	-0.22	0.22
	7	Life would be very dull if one couldn't drink	-0.16	**0.54**	-0.08	-0.02
	8	People who spend a lot of their time in public houses soon end up in trouble	**0.46**	-0.07	-0.23	0.20
	9	There is nothing wrong in having a few drinks	-0.23	**0.56**	0.07	-0.07
	10	Drink usually brings out the worst in people	**0.51**	-0.11	-0.23	0.07
	11	Having a drink with someone is a way of being friendly	-0.14	**0.54**	-0.02	0.01
	12	Drink is a cause of many unhappy marriages	**0.50**	-0.07	0.03	0.11
	13	People who drink and drive should be punished more severely	0.20	-0.07	-0.05	0.04

Table 9.4 - continued

ATTITUDES TO DRUNKENNESS & ALCOHOLISM	1	It does some people good to get drunk once in a while	-0.08	**0.45**	-0.06	**–0.42**
	2	It's embarrassing to see someone you know get drunk	**0.30**	-0.10	0.05	**0.60**
	3	I would feel ashamed if anyone in my family got drunk	**0.32**	-0.18	-0.07	**0.62**
	4	A drunken person is a disgusting sight	**0.35**	-0.08	-0.13	**0.52**
	5	Getting drunk is a good way of forgetting your troubles for a while	0.08	**0.39**	-0.06	-0.19
	6	A person who gets drunk in public has no self respect	**0.32**	-0.14	-0.18	**0.52**
	7	A drunken woman is a far worse sight than a drunken man	0.29	0.06	-0.10	0.12
	8	People who are drunk can be very amusing	-0.05	**0.41**	0.01	**–0.35**
	9	The earlier in life a person starts drinking alcohol the more likely that person is to become an alcoholic	**0.48**	-0.08	-0.23	0.10
	10	Doctors shouldn't waste time on alcoholics when they could be curing people with real illnesses	0.20	0.01	**–0.68**	0.05
	11	People who become alcoholics have only themselves to blame	0.22	-0.02	**–0.58**	0.04
	12	Even if an alcoholic claims to be cured, that person can never be trusted with a responsible job	0.18	0.01	**–0.59**	0.08
	13	Giving treatment to alcoholics is something well worth spending public money on	-0.04	0.06	**0.53**	0.00
	14	Alcoholics can never reach the point where they stop drinking for good	0.14	0.04	**–0.53**	0.00
	15	People are often more honest when they're drunk than when they're sober	0.12	**0.34**	0.07	-0.22
		Proportion of total variance	9.8%	8.6%	7.4%	6.6%

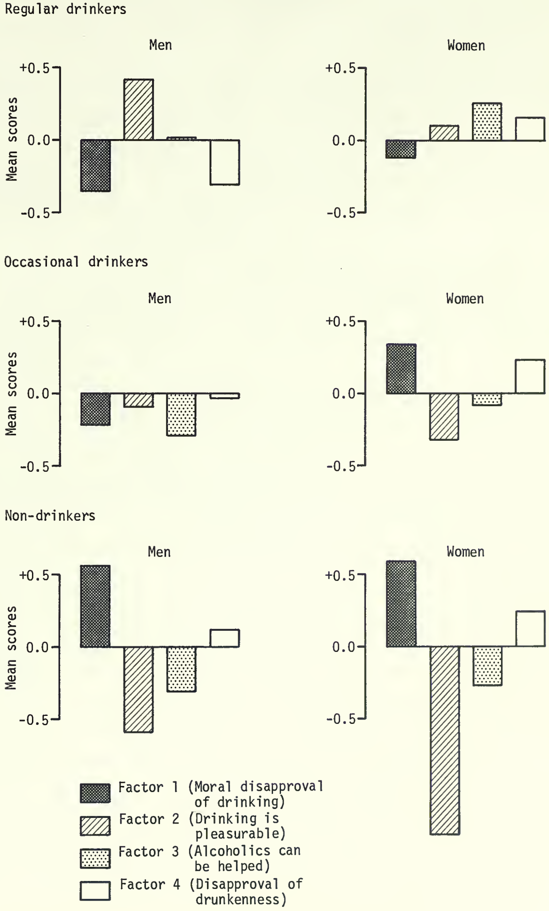
Factor loading ⩾ 0.30 in **bold**

Table 9.5 The distribution of mean scores on the four main attitudes towards drinking (Factors 1-4) by current drinking behaviour

Number of alcoholic units per week	Men					Women				
	Factor 1 Moral dis-approval of drinking	Factor 2 Drinking is pleasur-able	Factor 3 Alco-holics can be helped	Factor 4 Dis-approval of drunken-ness	*Base*†	Factor 1 Moral dis-approval of drinking	Factor 2 Drinking is pleasur-able	Factor 3 Alco-holics can be helped	Factor 4 Dis-approval of drunken-ness	*Base*††
51+	-0.69	0.76	-0.09	-0.71	*104.2*					
21-50	-0.54	0.67	0.10	-0.51	*298.2*	-0.80	0.42	0.40	-0.02	*80.8*
11-20	-0.37	0.48	0.00	-0.33	*251.2*					
6-10	-0.22	0.28	0.00	-0.17	*237.0*	-0.47	0.41	0.34	-0.17	*161.3*
3-5	-0.24	0.14	0.07	-0.19	*157.0*	-0.15	0.09	0.35	0.09	*257.1*
1-2	-0.01	-0.00	-0.04	0.13	*130.3*	0.23	-0.10	0.13	0.40	*350.8*
All regular drinkers	-0.35	0.42	0.02	-0.31	*1178.1*	-0.12	0.10	0.26	0.16	*849.9*
Occasional drinkers	-0.22	-0.09	-0.29	-0.03	*340.0*	0.34	-0.32	-0.08	0.23	*776.3*
Non-drinkers	0.56	-0.59	-0.31	0.12	*75.0*	0.59	-1.30	-0.27	0.24	*221.8*
Total	-0.19	0.28	-0.06	-0.23	*1593.1*	0.16	-0.24	0.05	0.20	*1848.1*

† *25.0 men have been excluded because they did not understand the term 'alcoholic'*
†† *38.8 women have been excluded because they did not understand the term 'alcoholic'*

Fig 9(a) Mean scores on the four main attitudes towards drinking (Factors 1-4) by sex and current drinking behaviour



Having established the overall differences between the attitudes of men and women we shall now examine how the attitudes vary according to the amount of alcohol consumed. Amongst men there are several very strong trends: the greater the amount of alcohol consumed the lower the score on Factors 1 and 4, disapproval of drinking and disapproval of drunkenness, and the higher the score on Factor 2, drinking is pleasurable. On the other hand, with Factor 3, the belief that alcoholics can be helped, it can be seen that regular drinkers have a higher score than occasional or non-drinkers but there is no general trend since the scores amongst regular drinkers do not vary according to the amount of alcohol consumed.

Turning now to the relationship between the scores on each factor and current drinking behaviour amongst women we find that the trends for the first two factors replicate the findings for men. It should be noted that the heaviest drinkers amongst women (ie those who consume 11 or more alcoholic units per week) tend to view drinking with slightly less disapproval than the heaviest drinkers amongst men (ie. those who consume 51 or more alcoholic units per week). At the other extreme, female non-drinkers have an exceptionally low score on Factor 2, drinking is pleasurable (- 1.30). Unlike men there is not a steady trend for a lower score on disapproval of drunkenness to be associated with an increase in amount of alcohol consumed. Since the scores on this factor do not vary very much it can be concluded that women, whatever the amount of alcohol they consume, will tend to be consistently hostile to drunkenness. We also find that the relationship between current drinking behaviour and Factor 3, alcoholics can be helped, differs between men and women. Amongst women there is a trend showing that a higher score on this factor is associated with a higher level of alcoholic consumption whereas amongst men we only found a difference between regular drinkers and all others.

In summing up our results it is useful to refer to Fig.9(a) where it can be seen that women, whatever their current drinking behaviour, will tend to view drunkenness at a similar level of disapproval and this level is always higher than for men. Women also view drinking as such with more disapproval than men although the difference disappears amongst non-drinkers. Consistent with these results is the finding that men are much more likely than women to view drinking as pleasurable. Finally, it can be seen that women, except for non-drinkers, are more receptive to the view that alcoholics can be helped.

9.7 The relationship between the four main attitudes towards drinking and age at the time of interview

The distribution of the mean scores on each factor for the three main age groups are shown in Table 9.6 for men and women respectively and they have been presented diagramatically in Fig.9(b).

If we initially look at the differences in factor scores amongst men it can be seen that the younger the informant the less disapproving he is likely to be of drinking and of drunkenness. In particular, men aged 17-30 have an exceptionally low mean score on disapproval of drunkenness (- 0.74). A possible explanation is that there may be social status attached to getting drunk amongst young men. It is also evident that younger men tend to be more optimistic about treatment for alcoholics shown by their higher scores on Factor 3. However, the attitude that drinking is pleasurable (Factor 2) shows no variation between the three age groups.

The same trends as for men for Factors 1, 3 and 4 are visible in the table for women. Unlike men, however, we find that women who are under 50 are more likely to consider drinking pleasurable (ie. have a higher score on Factor 2) than those over 50.

As these results differ with respect to Factor 2, drinking is pleasurable, from those of the previous section it is likely that age and current drinking behaviour have separate influences on the four basic attitudes towards drinking. However, we were interested in finding out the joint effects of age and current drinking behaviour which can be seen from examining Tables 9.7A and 9.7B for men and women respectively.

Table 9.6 The distribution of mean scores on the four main attitudes towards drinking (Factors 1-4) by age at the time

Table 9.6 The distribution of mean scores on the four main attitudes towards drinking (Factors 1-4) by age at the time of interview

Age at the time of interview	Men					Women				
	Factor 1 Moral dis-approval of drinking	Factor 2 Drinking is pleasur-able	Factor 3 Alco-holics can be helped	Factor 4 Dis-approval of drunken-ness	*Base*†	Factor 1 Moral dis-approval of drinking	Factor 2 Drinking is pleasur-able	Factor 3 Alco-holics can be helped	Factor 4 Dis-approval of drunken-ness	*Base*††
17-30	-0.48	0.34	0.16	-0.74	*432.1*	-0.21	-0.11	0.30	-0.17	*493.9*
31-50	-0.31	0.27	0.05	-0.27	*593.0*	0.10	-0.08	0.21	0.14	*599.6*
51+	0.16	0.24	-0.34	0.20	*568.0*	0.46	-0.45	-0.23	0.47	*750.1*
Total	-0.19	0.28	-0.06	-0.23	*1593.1*	0.16	-0.24	0.05	0.19	*1848.1*

† *25.0 men have been excluded because they did not understand the term 'alcoholic'*
†† *38.8 women have been excluded because they did not understand the term 'alcoholic'*

Fig 9(b) Mean scores on the four main attitudes to drinking (Factors 1-4) by sex and age at the time of interview

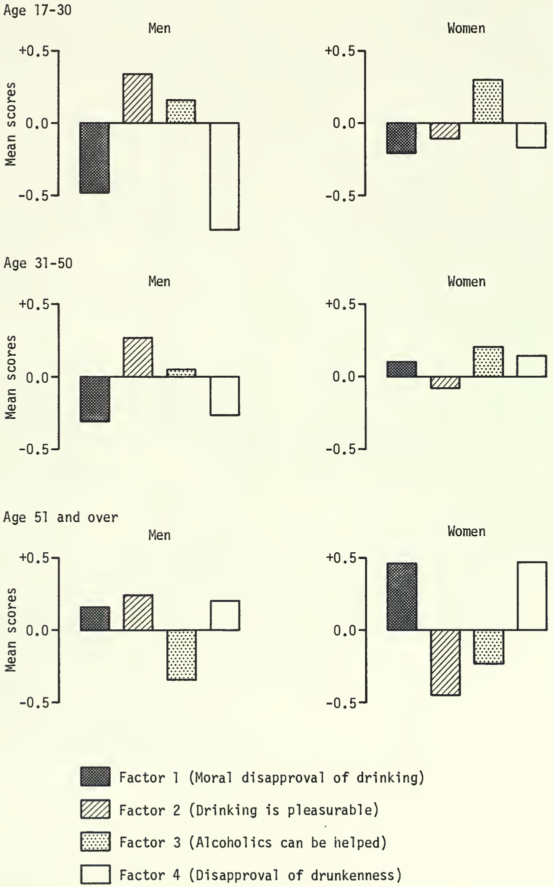


Table 9.7A Men - The distribution of mean scores on the four main attitudes towards drinking (Factors 1-4) by age and current drinking behaviour

Number of alcoholic units per week	Factor 1 Moral disapproval of drinking			Factor 2 Drinking is pleasurable			Factor 3 Alcoholics can be helped			Factor 4 Disapproval of drunkeness					
	17-30	31-50	51+	17-30	31-50	51+	17-30	31-50	51+	17-30	31-50	51+	*Base† 17-30*	*Base† 31-50*	*Base† 51+*
21+	-0.73	-0.53	-0.34	0.63	0.71	0.80	0.12	0.03	-0.05	-0.92	-0.47	0.04	*167.6*	*160.0*	*75.0*
6-20	-0.38	-0.38	-0.06	0.33	0.30	0.57	0.16	0.05	-0.24	-0.63	-0.32	0.28	*146.3*	*206.0*	*136.0*
1-5	-0.30	-0.28	0.09	-0.06	0.04	0.18	0.32	0.15	-0.26	-0.70	0.01	0.24	*61.3*	*110.0*	*116.0*
All regular drinkers	-0.52	-0.41	-0.07	0.40	0.38	0.49	0.17	0.07	-0.20	-0.77	-0.29	0.21	*375.1*	*476.0*	*327.0*
Occasional drinkers	-0.18	0.06	0.44	0.01	-0.08	0.03	0.15	-0.08	-0.53	-0.58	-0.15	0.20	*52.0*	*102.0*	*186.0*
Non-drinkers	*	*	0.63	*	*	-0.52	*	*	-0.48	*	*	0.19	*5.0*	*15.0*	*55.0*
All men	-0.48	-0.31	0.16	0.34	0.27	0.24	0.16	0.05	-0.34	-0.74	-0.27	0.20	*434.1*	*593.1*	*568.0*

* *Base is too small to give a reliable mean*
† *Excludes those men who did not understand the term 'alcoholic'*

Table 9.7B Women - The distribution of mean scores on the four main attitudes towards drinking (Factors 1-4) by age and current drinking behaviour

Number of alcoholic units per week	Factor 1 Moral disapproval of drinking			Factor 2 Drinking is pleasurable			Factor 3 Alcoholics can be helped			Factor 4 Disapproval of drunkeness					
	17-30	31-50	51+	17-30	31-50	51+	17-30	31-50	51+	17-30	31-50	51+	*Base† 17-30*	*Base† 31-50*	*Base† 51+*
6+	-0.71	-0.50	-0.43	0.31	0.40	0.67	0.28	0.44	0.44	-0.48	0.00	0.30	*116.7*	*73.0*	*52.4*
1-5	-0.20	0.07	0.35	-0.07	0.06	0.06	0.34	0.27	0.07	-0.14	0.25	0.69	*179.3*	*241.6*	*184.7*
All regular drinkers	-0.40	-0.06	0.18	0.08	0.14	0.10	0.31	0.31	0.15	-0.28	0.19	0.60	*296.0*	*314.6*	*237.1*
Occasional drinkers	0.06	0.23	0.56	-0.26	-0.24	-0.39	0.29	0.04	-0.35	-0.04	0.05	0.43	*160.8*	*257.6*	*355.7*
Non-drinkers	0.10	*	0.51	-0.99	*	-1.40	0.21	*	-0.53	0.13	*	0.26	*37.2*	*27.4*	*157.3*
All women	0.21	0.10	0.46	-0.11	-0.08	-0.45	0.30	0.21	-0.23	-0.17	0.14	0.47	*494.0*	*599.6*	*750.1*

** Base is too small to give a reliable mean*
† Excludes those women who did not understand the term 'alcoholic'

Inspection of these tables shows that the previous association between age and Factors 1, 3 and 4 is maintained whatever the level of drinking behaviour. Similarly the relationship between current drinking behaviour and Factors 1, 3 and 4 is upheld whatever the age of the informant. For Factor 2, drinking is pleasurable, however, we find that at each level of drinking older men tend to have higher scores than younger men. For women the earlier finding that younger women have the highest scores on this factor disappears when we look at comparable levels of alcoholic consumption. On the other hand, the results for current drinking behaviour are maintained since those men and women who drink a lot have higher scores on Factor 2, whatever their age.

9.8 The relationship between the four main attitudes towards drinking and social class of Head of Household

We have given the distribution of mean scores on each factor for each social class in Table 9.8 for men and women respectively.

Inspection of the table for men shows that there are some very marked trends relating factor scores to social class. The two strongest and totally consistent trends in mean scores are found with Factors 1 and 3 so that moving from social class 1 (Professional) to social class 5 (Semi and unskilled manual) men are increasingly more likely to disapprove of drinking but less likely to believe that alcoholics can be helped. For the other two factors, although there is not a consistent trend running from social classes 1 to 5, it is clear, firstly, that the non-manual group is less likely to view drinking as pleasurable (Factor 2) than the manual group and, secondly, that the former is more likely to view drunkenness with disapproval (Factor 4) than the latter. It is interesting that attitudes of disapproval towards drinking and drunkenness seem to be totally different for the non-manual and manual groups. While the non-manual group is less likely to disapprove of drinking it is more likely to disapprove of drunkenness. This ties in with our findings on current drinking behaviour where we found that the non-manual group had a relatively high proportion of regular drinkers but amongst the latter a relatively low mean amount of alcohol consumed[1]. In contrast the manual group has a more contradictory attitude in that members of this group are more likely to disapprove of drinking but less likely to disapprove of drunkenness. This may explain why the manual group does not have an above average proportion of regular drinkers but amongst the latter, the mean amount of alcohol consumed is considerably above average[1]. The ambivalence of the manual group is further heightened when we take into account that they are also more likely to view drinking as pleasurable (despite the fact that we have discovered they are more likely to disapprove of drinking).

If we now concentrate on the table for women it is evident that the same trends apply. Moving from social class 1 through to social class 5 we find that there is greater moral disapproval of drinking but less disapproval of drunkenness and less of a commitment to the view that alcoholics can be helped. There is no clear trend in scores on Factor 2, drinking is pleasurable, but there is a tendency for the manual group to have a stronger belief in this attitude. The previous findings relating to actual drinking behaviour were similar to those for men; a greater proportion of regular drinkers amongst the non-manual group but a lower mean amount consumed by these regular drinkers than their counterparts in the manual group[1]. Thus, the ambivalence in attitude of the manual group is also found amongst women.

To investigate further whether our findings for the relationship between social class and factor scores applied at every level of alcoholic consumption we have given the mean scores on each factor by current drinking behaviour for the non-manual and manual groups in Tables 9.9A and B for men and women respectively. It can be confirmed from these tables that whatever the level of alcoholic consumption the results for social class are maintained for every factor. Thus, those men and women who relatively drink a lot in the manual group will tend to be more disapproving of drinking but also more in agreement that drinking is pleasurable than their counterparts in the non-manual group. On the other hand, it is the latter group who will be more disapproving of drunkenness and have the stronger belief that alcoholics can be helped.

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[1] *See Section 3.7 p. 45 and Table 3.17 p. 61.*

Table 9.8 The distribution of mean scores on the four main attitudes towards drinking (Factors 1-4) by social class of Head of Household

Social Class of Head of Household	Men Factor 1 Moral dis-approval of drinking	Men Factor 2 Drinking is pleasur-able	Men Factor 3 Alco-holics can be helped	Men Factor 4 Dis-approval of drunken-ness	Men *Base*†	Women Factor 1 Moral dis-approval of drinking	Women Factor 2 Drinking is pleasur-able	Women Factor 3 Alco-holics can be helped	Women Factor 3 Dis-approval of drunken-ness	Women *Base*††
Professional (1)	-0.74	0.07	0.58	0.08	*74.0*	-0.39	-0.16	0.41	0.63	*96.4*
Intermediate (2)	-0.31	0.03	0.22	-0.04	*267.0*	0.02	-0.38	0.36	0.30	*283.4*
Other non-manual (3)	-0.23	0.07	0.09	-0.01	*181.0*	0.17	-0.14	0.10	0.30	*269.4*
Skilled manual (4)	-0.14	0.34	-0.11	-0.28	*635.0*	0.14	-0.19	0.08	0.06	*607.6*
Semi-and unskilled manual (5)	0.03	0.47	-0.39	-0.40	*366.3*	0.29	-0.04	-0.12	0.01	*309.2*
Housewife	-0.37	0.31	-0.13	-0.29	*40.8*	0.48	-0.61	-0.35	0.37	*225.7*
Not answered/inadeq-quately described	*	*	*	*	*21.0*	-0.03	-0.35	0.11	0.28	*54.4*
Total	-0.19	0.28	-0.06	-0.23	*1593.1*	0.16	-0.24	0.05	0.20	*1848.1*

† *25.0 men have been excluded because they did not understand the term 'alcoholic'*
†† *38.8 women have been excluded because they did not understand the term 'alcoholic'*
* *Base is too small to give a reliable mean*

Table 9.9A Men - The distribution of mean scores on the four main attitudes towards drinking (Factors 1-4) by social class and current drinking behaviour

	Factor 1 Moral disapproval of drinking		Factor 2 Drinking is pleasurable		Factor 3 Alcoholics can be helped		Factor 4 Disapproval of drunkeness		*Base*	*Base*
Number of alcoholic units per week	Non-manual	Manual	Non-manual	Manual	Non-manual	Manual	Non-manual	Manual	*Non-manual*	*Manual*
21+	-0.88	-0.46	0.54	0.74	0.42	-0.06	-0.41	-0.61	*90.0*	*283.0*
6-20	-0.57	-0.12	0.14	0.50	0.33	-0.17	-0.13	-0.29	*163.0*	*306.3*
1-5	-0.26	-0.04	-0.03	0.17	0.20	-0.14	0.13	-0.20	*131.0*	*148.0*
All regular drinkers	-0.53	-0.23	0.18	0.53	0.31	-0.12	-0.10	-0.39	*384.0*	*737.3*
Occasional drinkers	0.11	0.30	-0.13	0.08	0.01	-0.45	0.20	-0.15	*112.0*	*218.0*
Non-drinkers	*	0.57	*	-0.37	*	-0.50	*	-0.06	*27.0*	*47.0*
All men	-0.34	-0.07	0.05	0.39	0.22	-0.20	-0.00	-0.32	*525.0*	*1002.0*

Table 9.9B Women - The distribution of mean scores on the four main attitudes towards drinking (Factors 1-4) by social class and current drinking behaviour

	Factor 1 Moral disapproval of drinking		Factor 2 Drinking is pleasurable		Factor 3 Alcoholics can be helped		Factor 4 Disapproval of drunkeness		*Base*	*Base*
Number of alcoholic units per week	Non-manual	Manual	Non-manual	Manual	Non-manual	Manual	Non-manual	Manual	*Non-manual*	*Manual*
6+	-0.89	-0.43	0.40	0.43	0.64	0.17	0.09	-0.34	*86.4*	*127.4*
1-5	0.00	0.15	-0.14	0.17	0.45	0.04	0.46	0.06	*280.2*	*270.8*
All regular drinkers	-0.21	-0.04	-0.01	0.25	0.49	0.08	0.37	-0.07	*366.5*	*398.2*
Occasional drinkers	0.25	0.32	-0.39	-0.27	0.03	-0.03	0.30	0.12	*227.7*	*424.5*
Non-drinkers	0.60	0.56	-1.22	-1.18	-0.36	-0.07	0.41	0.12	*54.7*	*94.2*
All women	0.10	0.18	-0.24	-0.13	0.25	0.01	0.34	0.03	*646.7*	*999.1*

9.9 The relationship between the four main attitudes towards drinking and other demographic factors

We looked at the relationship between other demographic factors and the four main attitudes towards drinking and found that only income and church attendance had an influence on informants' attitudes. The higher the income the less the moral disapproval of drinking and the greater the belief that alcoholics can be helped.

The findings for church attendance showed that those who attended church at least once a week were the most disapproving of drinking and drunkenness, least likely to view drinking as pleasurable but most likely to believe that alcoholics can be helped. Our results on current drinking behaviour (see Section 9.6) showed that regular drinkers had the highest scores on Factor 3, alcoholics can be helped, and yet we know that amongst those who attend church at least once a week there is a relatively small proportion of regular drinkers (see Section 2.10). It can be concluded, therefore, that religious views on the value of helping and treating others (even though there is strong disapproval of drinking and drunkenness) override the negative attitude towards alcoholics that we would expect from those with an equivalent drinking background. It should be remembered, of course, that many religious or quasi-religious organisations, provide considerable help for alcoholics eg. Salvation Army, Samaritans, Alcoholics Anonymous.

9.10 Summary

We have found that majorities in both sexes agree not only with various statements that can be described as 'anti'-drinking but also with those expressing 'pro'-drinking attitudes. The ambivalence of the overall picture was more marked amongst men than amongst women, whose attitude to drinking was consistently more disapproving. Our analysis did not focus upon ambivalence at the individual level but since substantial proportions agreed with both types of statement there seems little doubt that positive and negative attitudes towards different aspects of drinking can co-exist within the same person.

A similar pattern was found in informants' reactions to statements about drunkenness. Both men and women tended to agree that drunkenness has unpleasant aspects, but more men agreed than disagreed with the statements that 'it does people good to get drunk once in a while' and that 'getting drunk is a good way of forgetting your troubles for a while'. Amongst women the proportion giving the 'anti'-drunkenness response was always the largest. Since certain groups within the male population are likely to be the main target of health educators concerned to reduce the prevalence of drunkenness and heavy drinking, the ambivalence of male attitudes is a factor which needs to be borne in mind. Much social psychological research has shown that in such circumstances persuasive (or dissuasive) communications have more chance of success if they acknowledge that the form of behaviour they aim to discourage has some attractions as well as (more serious) disadvantages.

Majorities of both men and women conceded that alcoholism was not an incurable condition and that treatment of alcoholics was a worthwhile medical enterprise. However, most informants took a harder line when expenditure of public money for this purpose was mentioned. It seems possible that the public is not fully aware of the drain on the national economy, in the shape of illness, absenteeism and inefficiency at work which the existence of untreated alcoholism already causes.

A factor analysis aimed at clarifying and measuring in a more systematic way the underlying structure of attitudes to drinking, drunkenness and alcoholism confirmed the above interpretation and enabled the analysis to be carried rather further. It proved possible to separate and interpret four factors underlying responses to the attitude statements; these were identified respectively as 'moral disapproval of drinking', 'belief that drinking is pleasurable', 'belief that alcoholics can be helped' and 'disapproval of drunkenness'. Each informant was assigned a score on each factor.

As compared with women, men were on average less disapproving of both drinking in general and drunkenness, more likely to consider that drinking is pleasurable, but less likely to believe that alcoholics can be helped. As might be expected, those who consumed greater quantities of alcohol were much less likely to express disapproval and much more convinced that drinking is pleasurable. This could be interpreted as simply a justification of a habit in which they frequently indulge but it may also be that the holding of such attitudes reinforces the heavy drinking habit. It is encouraging, however, that regular drinkers, who will probably have more contact with alcoholics than occasional or non-drinkers, tend to be the most optimistic about the view that alcoholics can be helped.

Younger informants tend to be both less disapproving of drinking and drunkenness and more optimistic that alcoholics can be helped than their elders. On the other hand, those men over 50 years of age who consume an equivalent quantity of alcohol to younger men (ie. 1-5, 6-20 and 21+ drinking categories) are consistently more likely to view drinking as pleasurable.

We have found that the non-manual group has an altogether more moderate and less ambivalent view of drinking than the manual group: the former are less likely to disapprove of drinking but also less likely to acknowledge that drinking is pleasurable. Moreover, the manual group are less likely to disapprove of drunkenness which may explain or be a justification for the fact that they are more likely to drink large amounts of alcohol. We also found that the manual group were more sceptical about the view that alcoholics can be helped than the non-manual group. This greater ambivalence towards drinking amongst the manual group may result from more ambivalent attitudes amongst individuals or it may be because this group contains sub groups which are strongly 'pro' or 'anti' drinking. In either case it seems that there is a greater sense of conflict concerning drinking amongst the working class (ie. manual group) than the middle class (ie. non-manual group).

From the foregoing it is likely that any campaign relating to treatment for alcoholics will receive a better reception from younger, non-manual, higher income groups and be more favoured by women than men. We have also noted that disapproval of drunkenness is least prevalent amongst young men belonging to the manual group who drink a lot so that it might be useful to direct 'anti'-drunkenness campaigns at this group. The appeal of drunkenness may be due to its psychological overtones of masculine 'toughness' which both Davies and Stacey and Bynner found in their surveys of drinking and smoking respectively amongst teenage boys. Thus an appeal based solely upon the harmful health and social consequences of drunkenness (ie. an appeal to caution and self-preservation rather than to the desire to appear tough and virile) may not be successful with the younger male drinker. With this group an effective campaign against drunkenness may need to attack the perceived connection between drunkenness or heavy drinking and attractive masculine traits such as 'toughness'.

Annex: Description of the factor analysis method used for attitudes towards drinking

The first step, as in our previous factor analysis, was to obtain a correlation matrix of all the attitude statements. In Table 9A we have ordered the statements so that they form clusters linked internally by relatively high correlations. It can be seen that the number of clusters distinguished, and the assignment of statements to them, was not absolutely determinate as many statements have substantial correlations with more than one cluster. It is clear, however, that there is one discrete cluster which includes all the statements describing attitudes towards alcoholics (items 24-27). There also seems to be a definite cluster comprising items 3-19 (the top left hand corner of the matrix) but closer inspection shows a sub-cluster of very high correlations amongst items 16, 15, 17 and 19 and two further items, 14 and 21, also seem to belong to this latter cluster (but are not part of the main cluster). It is possible therefore, either to distinguish two clusters which can be loosely interpreted as 'anti'-drinking and 'anti'-drunkenness respectively or to accept just one cluster representing a general negative attitude.

Inspection of the remaining high correlations shows that there is a cluster containing items 4, 9, 7, 11 and 1, which might be extended to include items 14, 21, 18 and 28. We concluded from this analysis that there were probably three or four main factors and so we carried out a factor analysis using the Principal factors program with Varimax rotation on the representative sample[1] in order to obtain results showing three, four and five factor solutions.

The results showed that the four factor solution accounted for more of the total variance than the three factor solution (32.4% compared with 29.7%) but that the five factor solution added little (33.4%). Another reason for rejecting this latter solution was that no meaningful interpretation of the fifth factor could be derived from the factor loadings and, furthermore, this factor only accounted for 1% of the total variance. Since the two factors, moral disapproval of drinking, and disapprovel of drunkenness, were easily distinguishable in terms of their different high factor loadings[2] and consequent interpretation it was decided to adopt the four factor solution. This solution is compatible with the results of the correlation analysis for we have two separate factors which are akin to the clusters dealing with statements about alcoholics (Factor 3) and statements about the pleasurable aspects of drinking (Factor 2). The first factor (moral disapproval of drinking) is basically concerned with'anti'-drinking statements but it includes a minority of the 'anti'-drunkenness statements leaving the majority to constitute a fourth factor (disapproval of drunkenness) which corresponds to our sub-cluster. It should also be noted that items 14 and 21 which overlapped two clusters also have high loadings on both Factors 2 and 4.

As with the factor analysis of motivation for drinking, we calculated factor scores for each informant which were then standardised. This enabled comparisons between informants' positions on each factor to be made.

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[1] *For definition of this sample see Annex to Chapter 8 p.183*

[2] *See Table 9.4 p.196*

Table 9A Correlation matrix of attitudes towards drinking

		3	10	12	8	5	6	22	2	16	15	17	19	14	21	18	28	4	9	7	11	1	23	24	25	26	27	13	20
Drink is one of the main causes of immoral behaviour	3																												
Drink usually brings out the worst in people	10	**35**																											
Drink is a cause of many unhappy marriages	12	**33**	**29**																										
People who spend a lot of time in public houses soon end up in trouble	8	**32**	**35**	**30**																									
Children and young people should be discouraged from taking up drinking	5	**29**	**22**	**24**	**22**																								
It's degrading for women to be seen drinking in public houses	6	**29**	**31**	**24**	**35**	**32**																							
The earlier in life a person starts drinking alcohol the more likely that person is to become an alcoholic	22	**29**	**31**	**24**	**33**	**32**	**28**																						
Drinking costs more money than pleasure worth	2	**27**	**28**	**24**	**23**	**30**	**27**	**29**																					
I would feel ashamed if anyone in my family got drunk	16	**25**	**24**	**22**	**28**	**23**	**37**	**28**	**23**																				
It's embarrassing to see someone you know get drunk	15	18	**20**	**24**	**23**	**20**	**26**	19	**20**	**55**																			
A drunken person is a disgusting sight	17	**25**	**27**	**24**	**26**	**27**	**30**	**23**	**23**	**47**	**47**																		
A person who gets drunk in public has no self-respect	19	**26**	**25**	**21**	**36**	**21**	**33**	**26**	**22**	**49**	**42**	**45**																	
It does people good to get drunk once in a while	14	$\overline{13}$	$\overline{09}$	$\overline{13}$	$\overline{13}$	$\overline{14}$	**$\overline{22}$**	$\overline{13}$	$\overline{15}$	**$\overline{38}$**	**$\overline{33}$**	**$\overline{25}$**	**$\overline{29}$**																
People who are drunk can be very amusing	21	$\overline{06}$	$\overline{12}$	21	$\overline{17}$	$\overline{14}$	**$\overline{21}$**	$\overline{09}$	$\overline{14}$	**$\overline{28}$**	**$\overline{23}$**	**$\overline{23}$**	**$\overline{26}$**	**36**															
Getting drunk is a good way of forgetting your troubles for a while	18	$\overline{02}$	$\overline{03}$	$\overline{01}$	$\overline{03}$	$\overline{03}$	$\overline{08}$	03	$\overline{07}$	$\overline{14}$	$\overline{11}$	$\overline{09}$	$\overline{10}$	**25**	**27**														
People are often more honest drunk than sober	28	01	01	03	$\overline{08}$	$\overline{05}$	$\overline{11}$	$\overline{06}$	$\overline{04}$	$\overline{15}$	$\overline{10}$	$\overline{11}$	$\overline{08}$	**25**	**29**	19													
Having a drink is one of the pleasures in life	4	$\overline{16}$	$\overline{19}$	$\overline{15}$	$\overline{16}$	$\overline{17}$	**$\overline{26}$**	$\overline{19}$	**31**	**$\overline{23}$**	$\overline{17}$	**$\overline{20}$**	**$\overline{20}$**	**29**	**30**	**22**	13												
There is nothing wrong in having a few drinks	9	$\overline{15}$	**$\overline{20}$**	**29**	$\overline{19}$	$\overline{16}$	**$\overline{32}$**	$\overline{19}$	$\overline{19}$	**$\overline{25}$**	$\overline{19}$	$\overline{15}$	**$\overline{21}$**	**28**	**26**	18	17	**45**											
Life would be very dull if one couldn't drink	7	$\overline{12}$	**35**	**30**	$\overline{06}$	$\overline{14}$	$\overline{14}$	$\overline{12}$	$\overline{17}$	$\overline{16}$	$\overline{13}$	**30**	$\overline{13}$	**32**	**20**	19	12	**43**	**31**										
Having a drink with someone is a way of being friendly	11	$\overline{06}$	$\overline{14}$	$\overline{10}$	$\overline{11}$	$\overline{10}$	**$\overline{21}$**	$\overline{08}$	$\overline{15}$	$\overline{14}$	$\overline{10}$	$\overline{09}$	$\overline{13}$	**22**	**21**	**22**	15	**38**	**42**	**33**									
A drink makes many people more sociable	1	$\overline{12}$	$\overline{19}$	$\overline{09}$	$\overline{12}$	$\overline{10}$	**$\overline{23}$**	$\overline{14}$	$\overline{19}$	$\overline{17}$	$\overline{09}$	$\overline{14}$	$\overline{15}$	**23**	**21**	17	**24**	**35**	**33**	**26**	**30**								
Doctors shouldn't waste time on alcoholics when they could be curing people with real illnesses	23	16	**27**	09	**23**	18	**24**	**29**	14	15	08	17	**24**	$\overline{13}$	$\overline{01}$	08	00	$\overline{11}$	$\overline{10}$	01	00	$\overline{13}$							
People who become alcoholics have only themselves to blame	24	16	**25**	09	**22**	**21**	**25**	**24**	**20**	12	04	**21**	**20**	$\overline{02}$	$\overline{03}$	02	$\overline{05}$	$\overline{09}$	$\overline{07}$	00	$\overline{03}$	$\overline{13}$	**49**						
Even if an alcoholic claims to be cured that person can never be trusted with a responsible job	25	19	**23**	10	**23**	15	**22**	**21**	15	16	05	19	**22**	$\overline{02}$	$\overline{02}$	00	$\overline{03}$	$\overline{05}$	$\overline{07}$	01	$\overline{02}$	$\overline{10}$	**42**	**37**					
Giving treatment to alcoholics is something well worth spending public money on	26	$\overline{10}$	$\overline{14}$	$\overline{02}$	$\overline{14}$	$\overline{10}$	$\overline{14}$	$\overline{12}$	$\overline{06}$	$\overline{06}$	00	$\overline{07}$	$\overline{12}$	$\overline{00}$	03	$\overline{02}$	06	06	08	06	$\overline{02}$	09	**$\overline{48}$**	**$\overline{34}$**	**$\overline{29}$**				
Alcoholics can never stop drinking	27	13	18	00	18	12	17	19	12	09	00	$\overline{13}$	15	06	00	04	01	04	$\overline{04}$	05	00	$\overline{07}$	**34**	**30**	**49**	**$\overline{23}$**			
People who drink and drive should be punished more severely	13	09	11	14	13	12	13	13	13	11	09	12	08	$\overline{07}$	$\overline{04}$	$\overline{01}$	$\overline{03}$	$\overline{12}$	$\overline{07}$	$\overline{10}$	$\overline{06}$	$\overline{06}$	06	08	10	$\overline{07}$	02		
A drunken women is a far worse sight than a drunken man	20	13	16	11	15	**20**	**22**	19	11	17	15	13	19	$\overline{03}$	01	07	02	$\overline{07}$	$\overline{03}$	$\overline{02}$	$\overline{04}$	00	12	17	10	$\overline{08}$	07	08	

Cluster 1 (Moral disapproval of drinking)

Cluster 2 (Disapproval of drunkeness)

Cluster 3 (Drinking is pleasurable)

Cluster 4 (Alcoholics can be helped)

Correlations ⩾ 0.20 in **bold**

Table 9B The distribution of factor estimation weights

		Attitude statement	Factor 1 Moral disapproval of drinking	Factor 2 Drinking is pleasurable	Factor 3 Alcoholics can be helped	Factor 4 Disapproval of drunkenness
ATTITUDES TO DRINKING	1	A drink makes many people more sociable	0.02	0.16	0.05	0.04
	2	Drinking costs more money than the pleasure is worth	0.14	-0.03	0.02	-0.06
	3	Drink is one of the main causes of immoral behaviour	0.19	0.04	0.03	-0.05
	4	Having a drink is one of the pleasures in life	-0.05	0.26	-0.04	0.10
	5	Children and young people should be discouraged from taking up drinking	0.14	-0.00	0.03	-0.02
	6	It's degrading for women to be seen drinking in public houses	0.11	-0.04	-0.02	0.01
	7	Life would be very dull if one couldn't drink	-0.03	0.18	-0.05	0.06
	8	People who spend a lot of time in public houses soon end up in trouble	0.14	0.04	-0.04	0.01
	9	There is nothing wrong in having a few drinks	-0.03	0.19	0.02	0.07
	10	Drink usually brings out the worst in people	0.17	0.01	-0.02	-0.06
	11	Having a drink with someone is a way of being friendly	-0.01	0.18	-0.01	0.08
	12	Drink is a cause of many unhappy marriages	0.19	0.02	0.09	-0.04
	13	People who drink and drive should be punished more severely	0.05	-0.01	0.01	-0.02

Table 9B - continued

ATTITUDES TO DRUNKENNESS & ALCOHOLISM	14	It does people good to get drunk once in a while	0.08	0.14	-0.04	-0.16
	15	It's embarrassing to see someone you know get drunk	0.04	0.06	0.08	0.26
	16	I would feel ashames if anyone in my family got drunk	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.30
	17	A drunken person is a disgusting sight	0.05	0.06	-0.01	0.20
	18	Getting drunk is a good way of forgetting your troubles for a while	0.08	0.12	0.00	-0.06
	19	A person who gets drunk in public has no self respect	0.01	0.01	-0.01	0.21
	20	A drunken woman is a far worse sight than a drunken man	0.08	0.05	0.00	0.01
	21	People who are drunk can be very amusing	0.08	0.10	0.02	-0.12
	22	The earlier in life a person starts drinking alcohol the more likely that person is to become an alcoholic	0.15	0.02	-0.02	-0.04
	23	Doctors shouldn't waste time on alcoholics when they could be curing people with real illnesses	-0.04	0.01	0.32	-0.01
	24	People who become alcoholics have only themselves to blame	0.00	0.01	-0.21	-0.02
	25	Even if an alcoholic claims to be cured, that person can never be trusted with a responsible job	-0.02	0.02	-0.23	0.01
	26	Giving treatment to alcoholics is something well worth spending public money on	0.06	0.03	0.19	0.01
	27	Alcoholics can never reach the point where they stop drinking for good	-0.02	0.02	-0.19	-0.02
	28	People are often more honest drunk than sober	0.12	0.11	0.04	-0.08

10 Attitudes towards drinking and health

10.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to examine informants' views on the effects that drinking can have on people's health. From our exploratory work it became clear that people did not have very specific views about drinking and health and, on the whole, had very little medical knowledge about the subject. At the main stage, therefore, we sought only to obtain informants' general, and perhaps rather superficial, views by asking whether or not they thought drinking could have good effects on health (Q.23) and whether or not they thought drinking could damage health (Q.24).

The questions focussed on informants' opinions about the effects of drinking on other people's health rather than upon their own health. There is a small minority of heavier drinkers who may well be aware of damaging effects of drinking upon their own health and this is, of course, a topic of considerable importance. However, in a survey of the general public, amongst whom the vast majority drink very little, questions about problems resulting from their drinking might be considered, at best, irrelevant and, at worst, impertinent and it was therefore thought best to avoid this topic in the interests of good general interview response and rapport.

The general term 'drinking' was used rather than heavy, moderate or light drinking as all of these have evaluative overtones. We could have attempted a more elaborate approach asking informants, for example, to specify the amount of alcohol that would constitute a health hazard but our exploratory work showed that this sort of detail was not justified as informants tended not to have thought about the issue very deeply.

Thus we shall be looking at any differences in opinion on the effects of drinking on health amongst those who consume differing quantities of alcohol and who are from different social backgrounds. In describing the specific types of good and bad effects of drinking on health mentioned by our informants we hope to help health educators identify any major areas where the public are ignorant or misinformed.

In order to put informants' views about the effects of drinking into perspective we decided to compare them with their views about the effects of smoking on health. Those who felt that both drinking and smoking could have damaging effects on health were asked which one they thought was more harmful. We shall be relating these views to informants' own particular drinking and smoking habits.

10.2 Opinions on the effects of drinking on health by current drinking behaviour

Informants were asked, firstly, "Do you think that taking alcoholic drinks can ever have good effects on a person's health?" (Q.23) and, secondly, "Do you think that drinking can ever damage people's health?" (Q.24). By combining their answers to these two questions we can ascertain the proportions who think that drinking has only good effects or only bad effects (ie. only agrees that drinking can damage health) or that it can have both good and bad effects on health.

In Table 10.1 we have presented the proportions of men and women in each drinking category who take the view that drinking can have good and/or bad effects on health. It can be seen, in the final row, that the overwhelming majority (96%) from both sexes consider that drinking can have bad effects on health. The penultimate row shows that approximately 40% of our informants think that drinking can have good effects on health

Table 10.1 The distribution of opinions on effects of drinking on health by sex and current drinking behaviour

Opinions on effects of drinking on health	Men				Women			
	Non-drinkers	Occasional drinkers	Regular drinkers	Total	Non-drinkers	Occasional drinkers	Regular drinkers	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Good effects only (no bad effects†)	4	2	1	1	1	3	1	2
Bad effects only (no good effects††)	55	56	55	55	66	58	58	58
Both bad and good effects	35	40	42	41	29	36	40	37
Neither good nor bad effects†††	6	2	1	3	5	3	2	3
All who stated drinking has good effects	39	41	43	42	30	39	41	38
All who stated drinking has bad effects	90	96	97	96	94	94	98	96
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*77.0*	*349.0*	*1192.1*	*1618.1*	*235.6*	*790.0*	*861.4*	*1886.9*

† *Includes a small number who don't know if there are any bad effects*
†† *Includes a small number who don't know if there are any good effects*
††† *Includes a small number who don't know if there are any bad or good effects.*

and that men are more likely to believe this than women (42% compared with 38%). However, this still leaves the majority of both men and women believing that drinking can only have bad effects.

We might expect that those informants who consume the greatest quantities of alcohol would be the least likely to think that drinking can have bad effects but the most likely to believe that it can have good effects on health. The latter hypothesis is confirmed since the proportion who think that drinking can have good effects rises fron non-drinkers through to regular drinkers in both sexes. On the other hand, it can be seen that for both males and females the highest proportions reporting that drinking can have bad effects on health are found amongst regular drinkers. A possible explanation is that those who drink regularly will tend to come into contact with more people whose health has been adversely affected by drink. It is clear, however, that the implication of our original hypothesis that regular drinkers would tend defensively to deny the possibility of ill effects is not supported since there is almost unanimous support for the view that drinking damage health, (97% and 98% of male and female regular drinkers respectively). More detailed analysis showed that within our group of regular drinkers there were no differences in the proportion reporting that drinking can have bad effects according to the number of alcoholic units consumed. Thus, even amongst our heaviest drinkers there is overwhelming recognition that drinking can damage health.

10.3 Opinions on the effects of drinking on health by age at the time of interview

From Table 10.2, which gives the proportions of men and women aged 17-30, 31-50 and over 50 who take the view that drinking can have good and/or bad effects on health, it can be seen that those under 50 are more prone than those over 50 to believe that drinking can damage health. Younger informants are also somewhat less likely than their elders to take the view that drinking can have good effects on health. Amongst women, the proportion stating that there are good effects decreases consistently with age while amongst men it is those aged 17-30 who have a much lower proportion than the two older groups. In Section 2.3 we found that younger people were more likely than their elders to be regular drinkers, but we have just found out that they are also less likely than older people to believe that drinking can have good effects. It thus appears that although young people are more aware than their elders of the damaging effects of drinking on health this is not reflected in their actual drinking behaviour. It is perhaps rather surprising that women over 50 years of age, whom we know tend to drink very infrequently and in very small amounts, have the highest proportion who believe drinking can have good effects - 46%.

10.4 Opinions on the effects of drinking on health by social class of the Head of Household

We thought that an informant's general life style as indicated by his or her social class might influence his or her opinions on the effects of drinking on health. We have therefore presented the distributions of opinions for each social class in Tables 10.3A and B for men and women respectively.

If we first look at the proportions who state that drinking has bad effects it is clear that there is little variation according to social class. It should be noted, however, that *all* women in the Professional class believe that drinking can damage health.

There is a marked trend running from social class 5 to social class 1, on the other hand, for both men and women increasingly to think that there are good effects of drinking on health. Indeed, the Professional class seems to have an exceptionally high proportion who consider that there are good effects - 64% of men and 52% of women in this class. Although we know that the Professional class does contain a higher proportion of regular drinkers. particularly amongst women, it is unlikely that this factor could account for the exceptionally high proportion believing that drinking can have good

Table 10.2

The distribution of opinions on the effects of drinking on health by sex and age at the time of interview

	Men				Women			
Opinions on effects of drinking on health	17-30 years	31-50 years	51+ years	All age groups	17-30 years	31-50 years	51+ years	All age groups
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Good effects only (no bad effects†)	-	-	2	1	-	-	3	2
Bad effects only (no good effects††)	60	55	52	55	69	61	51	59
Both good and bad effects	38	42	42	41	28	37	42	37
Neither good nor bad effects†††	2	2	4	3	3	2	3	3
All who state drinking has good effects	38	43	44	42	28	38	46	38
All who state drinking has bad effects	98	98	94	96	97	98	94	96
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*436.1*	*598.0*	*584.0*	*1618.1*	*493.9*	*606.4*	*782.0*	*1886.9*

† *Includes a small number who don't know if there are any bad effects*
†† *Includes a small number who don't know if there are any good effects*
††† *Includes a small number who don't know if there are any bad or good effects.*

effects on health. The reason for their stronger belief in the beneficial effects of drinking on health cannot easily be explained. It is likely that the non-manual group as a whole views drinking differently from the manual group shown by the fact that they are less likely to disapprove of drinking (lower scores on Factor 1) so that they may feel more able to say that drinking can have good effects on health.

Table 10.3A

Men - The distribution of opinions on effects of drinking on health by social class of Head of Household

Opinions on effects of drinking on health	Social class of Head of Household							
	Prof-essional	Inter-mediate	Other non-manual	Skilled manual	Semi&un skilled manual	House-wife	Don't know	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Good effects only (no bad effects†)	-	1	1	1	1	2	-	1
Bad effects only (no good effects††)	33	46	57	58	61	54	*7.0*	55
Both good and bad effects	64	50	40	38	35	42	*13.0*	41
Neither good nor bad effects†††	3	2	2	2	4	5	*1.0*	3
All who state drinking has good effects	64	52	41	40	35	42	*13.0*	42
All who state drinking has bad effects	97	97	97	97	96	95	*20.0*	96
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	*	100
Base	*75.0*	*270.0*	*182.0*	*648.0*	*375.3*	*40.8*	*21.0*	*1618.1*

* *Base is too small for percentaging - actual figures given in italics*
† *Includes a small number who don't know if there are any bad effects*
†† *Includes a small number who don't know if there are any good effects*
††† *Includes a small number who don't know if there are any bad or good effects.*

Table 10.3B

Women - The distribution of opinions on effects of drinking on health by social class of Head of Household

Opinions on effects of drinking on health	Social class of Head of Household							
	Prof-essional	Inter-mediate	Other non-manual	Skilled manual	Semi&un skilled manual	House-wife	Don't know	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Good effects only (no bad effects†)	-	-	3	1	1	5	-	2
Bad effects only (no good effects††)	48	52	59	65	60	54	61	59
Both good and bad effects	52	45	36	32	38	37	27	37
Neither good nor bad effects†††	-	3	2	2	1	5	13	3
All who state drinking has good effects	52	45	40	33	39	42	27	38
All who state drinking has bad effects	100	97	97	95	98	91	87	96
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*96.5*	*285.7*	*271.3*	*619.0*	*318.4*	*241.7*	*54.7*	*1886.9*

† *Includes a small number who don't know if there are any bad effects*
†† *Includes a small number who don't know if there are any good effects*
††† *Includes a small number who don't know if there are any bad or good effects.*

10.5 Informants' views on the ways in which drinking can have good effects on health

Since a sizeable minority of men and women (42% and 38% respectively) believe that drinking can have good effects on health we have shown in Table 10.4 the distribution of the specific good effects mentioned.

It can be seen that almost a fifth of men and women believe that alcohol has beneficial effects as a stimulant or tonic. A further tenth consider that it actually 'builds you up physically' by providing extra vitamins, nourishment or enriching the blood system. Although we did not ask for details of the actual beverages having these effects 56% of those who thought that alcoholic drinks built you up physically specifically referred to stout or Guinness. Verbatim examples are *"Stout is good for the blood - it enriches it if people are anaemic"*, *"Guinness and stout are good for you after an operation"*, *"Stout is a food"*. 7% and 8% of men and women respectively reported that alcoholic drinks were good for heart trouble or blood pressure; whisky and brandy were the two types of beverage more frequently mentioned. The only other good effect mentioned by over 5% of informants was that having an alcoholic drink was a good remedy for minor illness like colds, chills, stomach upsets etc. Whisky was the beverage most frequently given as having this medical value. Some examples are *"If you're wet and cold taking half of whisky or brandy helps - it takes the chill off, warms you up"*, *"whisky and soda for acid stomach or bilious attack"*. In many of the answers there were references to the good effects alcoholic drinks had on old people and in some cases informants actually thought it helped to keep them alive eg. *"I think old people without a drop of spirits to warm them up would die earlier"*, *"Gives old folk a boost ... to get about in cold air"*, *"Whisky supposed to thin the blood, make you live longer"*. This medicinal use of alcohol by old people may explain our results in Section 10.2 where we found that those over 50 were most likely to believe in the good effects of drinking.

Table 10.4

Male and female informants' views on the good effects of drinking on health

Good effects of drinking on health	Men	Women
	%	%
Builds you up physically/gives you vitamins/ gives nourishment	11	8
Is a stimulant/tonic/settles nerves (physical aspect not mentioned)	20	18
Good for heart/blood pressure	7	8
Good for minor illnesses such as colds and chills	7	9
Helps for shock, fainting fits etc.	3	5
Good as laxative	4	3
Other reasons	3	4
Vague/Don't know[†]	5	4
Does not apply - No good effects on health	58	62
Total	100[ϕ]	100[ϕ]
Base	*1618.1*	*1886.9*

[†] *Only coded if no other answer given*

[ϕ] *Percentages do not sum to 100 as informants may give more than one answer.*

10.6 Informants' views on the ways in which drinking can damage health

The distribution of the ways in which informants consider that drinking can damage health are given in Table 10.5 for men and women respectively.

It is clear that the belief that drinking is bad for the liver is the most widely held view amongst both sexes. Approximately a third of men and women think that drinking can cause mental deterioration by dulling the senses, impairing concentration, damaging powers of judgment etc. Other effects frequently mentioned by both men and women are that drinking is bad for the stomach, bad for the heart and that it is addictive and can lead to alcoholism. It is interesting that while 15% of men and women believe

Table 10.5

Male and female informants' views on the ways in which drinking can damage health

Ways in which drinking can damage health		Men	Women
		%	%
Bad for liver (eg. cirrhosis, cancer of liver)		39	40
Causes mental deterioration		35	32
Bad for stomach/causes ulcers		26	30
Is addictive/can lead to alcoholism		20	17
Bad for heart/causes high blood pressure		15	15
Malnutrition/loss of appetite		10	11
Bad for kidneys/bladder/bowels		10	10
Can lead to obesity/gout		7	4
Bad for nervous system		6	5
Gives delirium tremens/shakes		3	3
Can impair vision		2	1
Resistance to illness lowered		2	2
Bad for chest/lungs		1	2
Vague/Don't know†		7	8
Other		8	8
Does not apply	Drinking cannot damage health/ Don't know if drinking can damage health	4	4
	Total	100ᶲ	100ᶲ
	Base	*1618.1*	*1886.9*

† *Only coded if no other answer given*
ᶲ *Percentages do not sum to 100 as informants may give more than one answer.*

drinking is bad for the heart we found in the previous section that 7% considered it good for the heart. This is not necessarily contradictory since the two groups may contain different informants or the good effect may refer to drinking in moderation while the bad effect may refer to drinking to excess. 10% of all informants believe that drinking can lead to malnutrition while approximately the same proportion considered that it could 'build you up physically' but the same explanation of this apparent contradiction applies as before. Another 10% also thought that drinking was bad for the kidneys, bladder or bowels.

Thus, there is widespread acceptance that drinking can be harmful in a variety of ways. The types of ways given and the frequency with which they are mentioned do not differ between men and women.

10.7 Opinions on whether smoking or drinking is more harmful to health by current drinking behaviour

In order to place drinking in perspective with other socio-medical problems we asked informants initially, whether or not they thought that smoking could damage health and, subsequently, whether they considered smoking or drinking more harmful to health (given that they had previously stated that both could damage health).

We found that 91% of men and 90% of women believed that smoking could damage health. This is slightly lower than the proportion (96%) who believed that drinking could damage health which is perhaps rather surprising in view of the extensive anti-smoking campaigns. In fact 6% of both sexes categorically stated that they thought smoking never damaged health whereas in the case of drinking this applied to only 1% and 2% of men and women respectively.

It seems, therefore, that informants consider the potential for damaging health is greater with drinking than with smoking. However, we wanted to know which they felt was currently more harmful to people's health overall when asked directly to compare smoking and drinking. In Tables 10.6A and B we have given the proportions of men and women who consider either smoking or drinking more harmful to health according to the actual amount of alcohol they consume.

It is clear that smoking is generally considered more harmful to people's health than drinking. Men are particularly likely to hold this view - 63% compared with only 25% believing that drinking is more harmful. It can also be seen that the greater the amount of alcohol consumed by informants the more likely are they to consider that smoking is the more harmful. 44% of male non-drinkers take this view compared with 76% of men who consume 51 or more alcoholic units per week. It seems, therefore, that the greater the amount of alcohol consumed by informants' the greater their need to justify this by saying that smoking is more harmful than drinking to health. The one exception to this trend are women in the highest drinking category who have a greater tendency to state that drinking is more harmful (46%) than that smoking is more harmful (37%). (It is hard to ascertain the reason for this exception but it is conceivable that women in this group have more contact with people with drinking problems and so are more aware of the harmful effects.)

Table 10.6A Men - The distribution of opinions on whether smoking or drinking is more harmful to health by current drinking behaviour

Opinions on whether smoking or drinking is more harmful to health	Regular drinkers: Number of alcoholic units per week						All regular drinkers	Occasional drinkers	Non-drinkers	Total
	51+	21-50	11-20	6-10	3-5	1-2				
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Smoking more harmful†	76	76	68	69	58	54	68	48	44	63
Drinking more harmful††	19	16	21	21	28	32	22	34	40	25
Both the same	4	7	8	7	11	11	8	12	12	9
Neither damage health	1	-	-	1	1	1	1	1	-	1
Don't know which is more harmful	-	-	2	1	2	2	1	3	1	2
Don't know whether either damage health/ Not answered	-	1	2	1	1	-	1	1	3	1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*106.3*	*300.3*	*253.3*	*241.0*	*159.0*	*132.3*	*1192.1*	*349.0*	*77.0*	*1618.1*

† Includes a small number who have said drinking cannot harm health (Q.24 code 2) but smoking does (Q.25 code 1)
†† Includes a small number who have said drinking can harm health (Q.24 code 1) but smoking does not (Q.25 code 2).

Table 10.6B Women - The distribution of opinions on whether smoking or drinking is more harmful to health by current drinking behaviour

Opinions on whether smoking or drinking is more harmful to health	Regular drinkers: Number of alcoholic units per week				All regular drinkers	Occasional drinkers	Non-drinkers	Total
	11+	6-10	3-5	1-2				
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Smoking more harmful†	37	60	51	55	53	40	28	45
Drinking more harmful††	46	25	31	27	30	34	39	33
Both the same	11	8	16	15	14	21	28	19
Neither damage health	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	1
Don't know which is more harmful	6	3	2	2	3	3	-	2
Don't know whether either damage health/ Not answered	-	3	-	-	1	1	4	1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*80.8*	*161.3*	*261.6*	*357.7*	*861.4*	*790.0*	*235.6*	*1886.9*

† *Includes a small number who have said drinking cannot harm health (Q.24 code 2) but smoking does (Q.25 code 1)*

†† *Includes a small number who have said drinking can harm health (Q.24 code 1) but smoking does not (Q.25 code 2)*

10.8 Opinions on whether smoking or drinking is more harmful to health by smoking behaviour

Since we asked informants to compare smoking with drinking it seemed plausible that their own smoking behaviour might have an influence on their overall opinions. It could be hypothesized, for example, that the greater the number of cigarettes smoked the more defensive an attitude towards smoking would be adopted by informants and the less likely they would be to state that smoking was more harmful.

In Tables 10.7A and B we have given the distribution of overall opinions about whether smoking or drinking is more harmful to health by smoking behaviour for men and women respectively. Amongst men it is clear that non-smokers are rather more inclined than smokers to believe that smoking is more harmful to health (66% compared with 61%). However there is no difference in this proportion according to amount smoked except for the lowest category, up to 4 cigarettes a day, where there is an inexplicably high proportion believing that smoking is more harmful.

On the other hand, amongst women, there is no variation between smokers and non-smokers in the proportion believing smoking is more harmful. It should be noted, though, that those women who smoked 25 or more cigarettes a day have an exceptionally low proportion believing that smoking is more harmful (33%). In fact when women are divided into groups according to their smoking behaviour this is the only group where the proportion reporting that drinking is more harmful exceeds the proportion reporting that smoking is more harmful. As with the finding for women in the highest drinking category, who were also more likely to say that drinking is more harmful, there is no obvious explanation for this result.

Table 10.7A

Men - The distribution of opinions on whether smoking or drinking is more harmful to health

Whether smoking or drinking is more harmful	Non-smoker	Number of cigarettes smoked per day						All smok-ers†	Total
		≤4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25+		
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Smoking more harmful	66	71	48	59	61	62	61	61	63
Drinking more harmful	22	20	37	28	27	24	29	27	25
Both the same	9	5	9	8	8	12	7	9	9
Neither damage health	-	-	1	2	1	-	-	1	1
Don't know which is more harmful	2	3	3	2	1	-	1	2	2
Don't know whether either damage health	-	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*561.3*	*87.0*	*106.0*	*184.8*	*179.0*	*273.0*	*204.0*	*1056.8*	*1618.1*

† *Includes those who smoked but did not state the amount they smoked.*

Table 10.7B

Women - The distribution of opinions on whether smoking or drinking is more harmful to health

Whether smoking or drinking is more harmful	Non-smoker	Number of cigarettes smoked per day						All smokers†	Total
		≤4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25+		
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Smoking more harmful	45	43	46	45	45	45	33	44	45
Drinking more harmful	30	43	26	33	39	32	46	36	32
Both the same	21	12	24	15	13	17	12	16	18
Neither damage health	-	-	4	2	-	1	4	-	1
Don't know which is more harmful	3	2	-	4	3	1	-	2	2
Don't know whether either damage health	1	-	-	1	-	1	4	1	1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*149.6*	*111.7*	*114.7*	*187.7*	*139.8*	*196.8*	*54.7*	*837.3*	*1886.9*

† *Includes those who smoked but did not state the amount they smoked.*

10.9 Opinions on whether smoking or drinking is more harmful to health by current drinking behaviour and current smoking behaviour

In the previous two sections we have found, firstly, that the greater the amount of alcohol consumed the higher the proportion asserting that smoking is more harmful to health and secondly, that amongst men, non-smokers are more inclined than smokers to believe smoking is the more serious risk to health. We shall examine, therefore, the joint effects of informants' current drinking behaviour and smoking behaviour on their opinions to see whether or not these two factors are independent of each other.

In Table 10.8 we have given the proportions who think that smoking is more harmful to health (heavy type) and the proportions who think that drinking is more harmful to health (light type) for male and female non-drinkers, occasional drinkers and regular drinkers subdivided according to whether or not they smoke.

In looking at this table it is best to directly compare the proportions reporting that smoking or drinking is more harmful to health. It is clear that those men and women who smoke but do not drink have a much greater proportion stating that drinking is more harmful. This supports the hypothesis that they are being defensive about their own behaviour (ie. smoking) and justifying it by saying that the habit in which they do not indulge (ie. drinking) is the more harmful. This hypothesis gains further support from the finding that male and female drinkers (both occasional and regular) who are non-smokers consistently show a much higher proportion reporting that smoking is more harmful. If we now looked at those who smoke and drink it seems that drinking has the overriding influence since they are more likely to believe that smoking is more harmful. One notable exception, however, is the group of female occasional drinkers who smoke where the proportion believing drinking is more harmful exceeds the proportion believing smoking is more harmful. Since women in this group tend to drink infrequently and in very small quantities it is plausible that they may be more concerned with their smoking behaviour. Finally, amongst those who neither smoke nor drink it can be seen that an informant's sex is the major factor as men will tend to say smoking is more harmful while women will tend to say drinking is more harmful.

Table 10.8 The proportions who consider smoking or drinking is more harmful to health by sex, current drinking behaviour and smoking behaviour

Smoking behaviour	Men				Women			
	Non-drinkers	Occasional drinkers	Regular drinkers	Total	Non-drinkers	Occasional drinkers	Regular drinkers	Total
	30	32	18	22	37	28	27	30
Non-smoker	**55**	**53**	**72**	**66**	**29**	**44**	**54**	**45**
Base	*40.0*	*135.0*	*385.3*	*560.3*	*194.8*	*439.5*	*415.4*	*1049.6*
	51	36	23	27	45	41	32	36
Smoker	**32**	**45**	**66**	**61**	**27**	**35**	**52**	**44**
Base	*37.0*	*214.0*	*806.8*	*1057.8*	*40.8*	*350.6*	*446.0*	*837.3*
	40	34	22	25	39	34	30	33
Total	**44**	**48**	**68**	**63**	**28**	**40**	**53**	**45**
Base	*77.0*	*349.0*	*1192.1*	*1618.1*	*235.6*	*790.0*	*861.4*	*1886.9*

— Percentage reporting drinking more harmful

— **Percentage reporting smoking more harmful**

10.10 Summary

There is virtually unanimous acceptance of the view that drinking can damage health (mentioned by 96% of men and women). Nevertheless, there is also a sizeable minority (42% of men and 38% of women) who believe that drinking can have some good effects on health. Thus, we have further evidence that both positive and negative views about drinking are common amongst the public.

The greater the amount of alcohol consumed by informants the more likely they are to believe that drinking can have good effects on health which they may see as justifying their own behaviour. Paradoxically they are also slightly more likely to take the view that drinking can have bad effects on health (97% and 98% of male and female regular drinkers respectively). Even amongst our heaviest drinkers there is overwhelming recognition that drinking can damage health although this does not seem to affect their own drinking behaviour.

Older people are more likely than younger people to feel that drinking has good effects and less inclined to state that it has bad effects on health. We have also found that acceptance of the view that drinking can have good effects on health increases as we move from the Semi and unskilled manual class up to the Professional class (35% rising to 64% amongst men, 39% rising to 52% amongst women). It is possible that this is connected with the non-manual group's more tolerant attitude towards drinking shown by the fact that they are less likely than their manual counterparts to morally disapprove of drinking (ie. lower score on Factor 1 of attitudes to drinking[1]).

The types of good effects most frequently mentioned by informants were that alcohol was a food (particularly stout), it enriched the blood, it acted as a stimulant and it soothed the nerves (particularly whisky). Many informants spontaneously mentioned that alcohol was good for old people for the reasons given above and because it kept them warm which may explain why older people themselves are more likely to believe that alcohol can have good effects. In other words, older people are more inclined to see and, probably use, alcohol as a medicine than younger people. We would expect that informants had in mind here a very moderate or occasional use of alcohol.

The way in which drinking can harm health most frequently stated by informants was that it caused damage to the liver (mentioned by 39% and 40% of men and women respectively). Other bad effects frequently stated were that it caused mental deterioration, stomach complaints (eg. ulcers), heart complaints, malnutrition and kidney/bladder complaints in that order.

A slightly lower proportion consider that smoking can damage health (91% of men, 90% of women) than that drinking can damage health. However, when asked directly whether they felt smoking or drinking was actually more harmful to people's health overall, higher proportions asserted that smoking was more harmful (53% compared with 29% reporting drinking as more harmful).

Men are considerably more likely than women to report that smoking is more harmful than drinking to health - 63% compared with 45%. This difference cannot be attributed to mens' higher rate of alcoholic consumption as it persists when amount drunk is held constant.

In general, informants' opinions on whether smoking or drinking is more harmful to health seem to reflect an extension of and, perhaps a justification, of their own behaviour. Thus, those who smoke but do not drink tend to state that drinking is the more harmful. Conversely, those who drink but do not smoke tend to state that smoking is the more harmful. However, those who both smoke and drink are more likely to state that smoking is the more harmful which suggests that the overriding tendency is for informants to adopt an attitude consistent with their drinking behaviour. Moreover, the greater the amount of alcohol an informant consumes the more likely he or she is to assert that smoking is the more harmful. Lastly, it is interesting to note that amongst those who neither smoke nor drink men will tend to say smoking is the more harmful while women will tend to say drinking is the more harmful to health.

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[1] *See Section 9.8 p.205*

11 Experience of public drunkenness and attitudes towards its control

11.1 Introduction

In Chapter 9 we examined and discussed informants' general attitudes towards drinking, drunkenness and alcoholism; in this chapter we shall investigate the degree to which drunken behaviour on the part of other members of the public actually impinges upon informants in their daily lives, and their views on the control of drunkenness in public places.

A thorough examination of the topic of drunkenness would necessitate obtaining evidence on whether and how often informants themselves and members of their immediate families became drunk but it was felt that questioning on such potentially sensitive topics might cause informants to withdraw their co-operation in the interview and was, in any case, not crucial for a general survey of this kind. Accordingly, no data were collected on personal or family incidents of drunkenness and this chapter deals only with more generalised reactions to drunken behaviour in public places.

It is nevertheless of interest to examine the extent to which various sections of the population come into contact with public drunkenness, whether or not they are satisfied with the measures taken by the authorities to deal with such behaviour and, if not, what more they think could or should be done.

11.2 Informants' observation of public drunkenness in the streets by region

In order to obtain a rough indication of the degree to which public drunkenness impinges upon informants they were asked whether and how often they 'saw drunken people in the streets in this area' (Q.28). As can be seen from the total columns of Tables 11.1A and B, surprisingly high proportions (61% of all men and 48% of all women) claimed that this happened at least once a week. The fact that the figure for men is considerably higher than that for women presumably reflects the fact, demonstrated in Table 6.7, that men are much more likely than women to drink in public houses, in the vicinity of which most public drunken behaviour probably occurs.

On similar reasoning we might expect public drunkenness to be much more prevalent in some localities than others, but unfortunately we have no means of classifying informants according, for example, to how close they lived to a public house, so as to test the validity of the conclusion. The much broader regional classification of informants' place of residence used in Tables 11.1A and B, does, indeed, show some differences in the reported frequency of public drunkenness. Perhaps surprisingly, the proportion of male informants who reported seeing drunken people in the streets at least once a week was at least as high in the Highlands (68%) as in the Western region which includes Glasgow and Clydeside (63-69%). This result is likely to be unreliable, as only about 57 male Highlanders were included in the sample, but it seems clear that the reported prevalence of public drunkenness was higher in the central belt of Scotland (Western, Central and South Eastern regions) than in the rest of the country excluding the Highlands.

Table 11.1A Men - Frequency with which drunken people are seen in the streets by region

Drunken people seen in the streets	Highlands	North East		Eastern		Central	South East		Western			Border	South West	Total
		Aberdeen	Other urban and rural	Dundee	Other urban and rural		Edinburgh	Other urban and rural	Clydeside conurbation	Glasgow city	Other urban and rural			
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
At least once a week	68	42	42	51	51	66	57	64	63	67	69	40	51	61
Once or twice a month	12	21	13	10	14	6	14	12	8	7	8	24	18	11
Twice a year or less	10	15	13	7	10	6	6	1	4	5	3	10	14	6
Never	9	22	31	32	22	21	21	20	24	21	17	21	16	21
Don't know/not answered	-	-	1	-	3	-	1	2	-	-	2	5	-	1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*57.0*	*67.0*	*87.0*	*57.0*	*77.0*	*92.0*	*140.3*	*161.0*	*279.3*	*245.0*	*268.3*	*38.3*	*49.0*	*1618.1*

Table 11.1B Women - Frequency with which drunken people are seen in the streets by region

Drunken people seen in the streets		North East		Eastern			South East		Western					
	High-lands	Aber-deen	Other urban and rural	Dun-dee	Other urban and rural	Cent-ral	Edin-burgh	Other urban and rural	Clyde-side conur-bation	Glas-gow city	Other urban and rural	Bord-er	South West	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
At least once a week	28	34	28	32	33	52	43	47	56	61	59	19	37	48
Once or twice a month	8	11	10	9	13	13	4	15	10	4	8	11	7	9
Twice a year or less	4	13	14	6	17	13	7	5	4	7	6	11	22	8
Never	56	39	45	52	37	23	44	31	31	28	24	58	30	34
Don't know/not answered	4	3	2	-	-	-	1	2	-	1	2	-	4	1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*57.0*	*84.1*	*96.8*	*74.0*	*104.9*	*89.9*	*175.0*	*229.0*	*252.5*	*319.6*	*302.0*	*40.8*	*61.6*	*1886.9*

The most obvious explanation for this result is simply that the population in the central belt is denser so that individuals will have a greater chance of seeing incidents of drunkenness. However, in the North East and Eastern regions we do not find that the most populous areas (ie. the cities of Aberdeen and Dundee) have higher rates of observation of public drunkenness than their surrounding, less urbanised, areas. It seems, therefore, that population density is not the main factor involved and that there are genuine regional variations. Some possible explanations for these variations are that in some regions drunken behaviour may take place more publicly than elsewhere, or that social habits differ in that men in some regions may be more likely to be on the streets at times and in places where drunkenness occurs.

The pattern of results for women (Table 11.1B) is in some respects similar, but in others markedly different. Residents in the Western region, including Glasgow and Clydeside, again report a well-above-average level of experience of drunkenness, but for women the South Eastern region, which includes Edinburgh, and the Highlands region are both well below average. Given the generally lower level of reporting by women, the results for the other regions show a pattern similar to that noted in the case of men, with the Border region again showing the lowest perceived level of drunkenness. Overall, there appears to be rather more regional variation in the figures for women; this once again may be a reflection of regional differences in social habits.

11.3 Informants' observation of public drunkenness in the streets by current drinking behaviour

Since drinking is so largely a social habit it might be expected that those most likely to come into contact with drunken behaviour would be those who themselves drink a lot. This hypothesis is supported by the fact that we know that heavier drinkers are more likely to have friends who are heavy drinkers (see Section 3.13) and to go out to drink in pubs, hotels, clubs, etc than lighter drinkers (see Section 6.7).

Tables 11.2A and B, however, show that the hypothesis that the higher the level of alcoholic consumption the more likely are informants to observe drunken behaviour is not supported. It can be seen that the heaviest drinkers (men who drink 51 or more alcoholic units per week) are much more likely than anyone else to report seeing drunken people in the streets but at lower levels of drinking the relationship is not maintained. It can be argued that these results give some support to the idea of a sub-culture of a small group of heavy drinkers who go out to drink (mainly in pubs) and mix mainly with other heavy drinkers and amongst whom the sight of drunkenness is a fairly common event (78% report seeing drunken behaviour at least once a week).

11.4 Informants' observation of public drunkenness in the streets by age at the time of interview

It is clear from Table 11.3 that the younger an informant the more likely he or she is to observe drunkenness frequently in the streets where he or she lives. This age trend is more marked amongst women than men. In fact, 60% of women aged 17-30 observe incidents of drunken behaviour in the streets at least once a week, which is approximately the same proportion as for men overall (61%). We know from Table 6B[1] that younger people are more likely to go out to drink in pubs, hotels, clubs, etc and this may partly account for their higher reported observation of drunken behaviour together with the fact that they are more likely to go out per se than older people.

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[1] *Annex to Chapter 6 p. 126.*

Table 11.2A Men - Frequency with which drunken people are seen in the streets by current drinking behaviour

Drunken people seen in the streets	Regular drinkers: Number of alcoholic units per week						All regular drinkers	Occasional drinkers	Non-drinkers	Total
	51+	21-50	11-20	6-10	3-5	1-2				
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
At least once a week	78	64	61	61	49	57	61	58	61	61
Once or twice a month	5	11	17	8	13	11	11	9	10	11
Twice a year or less	2	3	5	7	13	8	6	6	6	6
Never	15	20	16	22	24	22	20	25	22	21
Don't know/not answered	-	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	-	1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*106.3*	*300.3*	*253.3*	*241.0*	*159.0*	*132.3*	*1192.1*	*349.0*	*77.0*	*1618.1*

Table 11.2B Women - Frequency with which drunken people are seen in the streets by current drinking behaviour

Drunken people seen in the streets	Regular drinkers: Number of alcoholic units per week 11+	6-10	3-5	1-2	All regular drinkers	Occasional drinkers	Non-drinkers	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
At least once a week	44	51	51	44	48	50	42	48
Once or twice a month	14	10	11	8	10	9	7	9
Twice a year or less	6	10	6	10	8	8	8	8
Never	37	29	30	36	33	32	41	34
Don't know/not answered	-	-	2	1	1	1	2	1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*80.8*	*161.3*	*261.6*	*357.7*	*861.4*	*790.0*	*235.6*	*1886.9*

Table 11.3 Frequency with which drunken people are seen in the streets by sex and age at the time of interview

	Men				Women			
Drunken people seen in the streets	17-30 years	31-50 years	51 years and over	All age groups	17-30 years	31-50 years	51 years and over	All age groups
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
At least once a week	70	60	54	61	60	51	38	48
Once or twice a month	11	12	9	11	10	10	7	9
Twice a year or less	2	6	8	6	7	9	8	8
Never	16	20	27	21	22	29	44	34
Don't know/not answered	1	1	1	1	1	-	2	1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*436.1*	*598.0*	*584.0*	*1618.1*	*493.9*	*606.4*	*782.0*	*1886.9*

11.5 Informants' observation of public drunkenness in the streets by social class of Head of Household

Tables 11.4A and B reveal that the manual group as a whole (Classes 4 & 5) are much more likely than the non-manual group (Classes 1, 2 & 3) to report seeing drunken behaviour in the streets in their areas. (66% of men and 55% of women in the manual group report seeing incidents of drunkenness in their streets at least once a week compared to approximately 50% of men and 42% of women in the non-manual group.) We know from Table 6G[1] that working class (ie manual) informants are more likely to go out to drink in pubs, clubs and hotels while middle class (ie non-manual) informants are more likely to drink at home; this is a possible explanation for their different rates of observation of drunkenness in the streets. Alternatively, it can be argued that the different rates are a reflection of the type of residential area in which the two groups live; a predominantly middle class area is less likely to contain many pubs or clubs having a clientele who frequently get drunk in public.

Table 11.4A

Men - Frequency with which drunken people are seen in the streets by social class of Head of Household

Drunken people seen in the streets	Social class of Head of Household							
	Professional	Intermediate	Other non-manual	Skilled manual	Semi- and unskilled manual	Housewife	Don't know	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%		%
At least once a week	40	50	55	66	66	78	*14.9*	61
Once or twice a month	15	12	12	10	9	7	*3.0*	11
Twice a year or less	9	10	8	5	4	5	*2.0*	6
Never	32	26	23	19	20	10	*7.0*	21
Don't know / not answered	4	3	1	-	-	-	-	1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	*	100
Base	*75.0*	*270.0*	*182.0*	*648.0*	*375.3*	*40.8*	*27.0*	*1618.1*

* *Base is too small for percentaging - actual figures given in italics*

[1] *Annex to Chapter 6 p.126.*

Women - Frequency with which drunken people are seen in the streets by social class of Head of Household

Drunken people seen in the streets	Social class of Head of Household							
	Prof-essional	Inter-mediate	Other non-manual	Skilled manual	Semi- and unskilled manual	House-wife	Don't know	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
At least once a week	42	35	48	56	55	42	23	48
Once or twice a month	5	9	9	8	10	10	13	9
Twice a year or less	10	12	8	5	8	8	19	8
Never	44	41	34	30	28	36	42	34
Don't know / not answered	-	2	1	-	-	5	4	1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*96.5*	*285.7*	*271.3*	*619.0*	*318.4*	*241.7*	*54.4*	*1886.9*

11.6 Whether informants are satisfied or dissatisfied with the control of public drunkenness by current drinking behaviour

All informants were asked at Q.28(c) whether in general they were satisfied or dissatisfied with the way drunks are dealt with under the present system. An overall judgment was asked for, but if informants were insistent that they could not categorically say they were satisfied or dissatisfied we were prepared to accept the answer that in some ways they were satisfied and in other ways dissatisfied.

It can be seen from Tables 11.5A and B that there is a large measure of discontent with the way drunks are dealt with since 56% of men and 48% of women are overall dissatisfied (and a further 4% of each sex are in some ways dissatisfied). In previous results we have always found women to be more negative than men in their attitudes towards drinking and drunkenness so this result is a little surprising but it should be noted that as many as 16% of women were unsure in their attitude compared with only 6% of men.

Table 11.5A *Men* - Distribution of informants' views on whether satisfied or dissatisfied with the way drunks are dealt with, by current drinking behaviour

Views on way drunks are dealt with	Regular drinkers: Number of alcoholic units per week 51+	21-50	11-20	6-10	3-5	1-2	All regular drinkers	Occasional drinkers	Non-drinkers	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Satisfied	49	40	36	27	40	30	36	33	27	35
Dissatisfied	43	54	54	61	50	61	55	58	64	56
In some ways satisfied, in other ways dissatisfied	3	1	5	4	4	4	3	4	-	4
Unsure, not answered	4	6	6	7	7	5	6	4	9	6
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*106.3*	*300.3*	*253.3*	*241.0*	*159.0*	*132.3*	*1192.1*	*349.0*	*77.0*	*1618.1*

Table 11.5B Women - Distribution of informants' views on whether satisfied or dissatisfied with the way drunks are dealt with, by current drinking behaviour

Views on way drunks are dealt with	Regular drinkers: Number of alcoholic units per week				All regular drinkers	Occasional drinkers	Non-drinkers	Total
	11+	6-10	3-5	1-2				
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Satisfied	37	32	42	30	35	31	30	32
Dissatisfied	49	42	39	52	46	51	43	48
In some ways satisfied, in some ways dissatisfied	3	7	6	2	4	4	6	4
Unsure, not answered	11	18	13	15	15	15	21	16
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*80.8*	*161.3*	*261.6*	*357.7*	*861.4*	*790.0*	*235.6*	*1886.9*

Amongst men, it is clear that in general the greater the amount of alcohol consumed, the more likely are they to be satisfied with the way drunks are dealt with under the present system. (27% of non-drinkers rising to 49% of men who consume 51 or more alcoholic units per week are satisfied with the way drunks are dealt with.) It can be argued that those who drink a lot will tend to be those who are more likely to get drunk themselves and so are more likely to state that they are satisfied for fear of encouraging stricter controls on their own drinking. Alternatively, it could be said that heavier drinkers are likely to have a more tolerant and less punitive attitude towards drunken behaviour. This interpretation is, of course, supported by their lower scores on Factor 4, disapproval of drunkenness (see Table 9.5).

On the other hand, amongst women, there is no corresponding trend showing increased satisfaction with the control of drunks to be associated with a higher rate of alcoholic consumption. All that can be said is that female regular drinkers are slightly more likely to be satisfied than female occasional or non-drinkers (35% compared with 31% and 30% respectively). An explanation may again be found in informants' attitudes towards drunkenness since, whatever their current consumption of alcohol, women tended to consistently have high scores on Factor 4, disapproval of drunkenness (see Table 9.5).

11.7 Whether informants are satisfied or dissatisfied with the control of public drunkenness by the frequency with which it is seen in the streets

It is clear from Table 11.6 that those informants who observe drunken behaviour in their streets most often (at least once a week) are those most likely to be dissatisfied with the way drunks are dealt with (60% of men and 56% of women in this category). There is little variation, however, in the proportion dissatisfied with the way drunks are dealt with amongst those who observe drunken behaviour in their streets less frequently than once a week. It seems, therefore, that the majority of informants who regularly observe incidents of public drunkenness are generally dissatisfied with the way it is handled by the authorities.

We looked at the relationship between both age and social class and informants' satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the way drunks are dealt with, but no trends were noticeable.

11.8 The ways in which informants are dissatisfied with the control of drunkenness

All those who were dissatisfied (either generally or in some ways) with the control of public drunkenness were asked to specifically mention the ways in which they were dissatisfied [Q.28(d)].

From Table 11.7 it is clear that over a third of both men and women feel that people who are drunk in the streets should be punished more severely by receiving stiffer penalties such as heavier fines and prison sentences. A further 10% of both men and women also stated that drunks should always be punished and complained that sometimes they were simply moved on by the police. In fact, 4% of men and 3% of women actually stated that they thought known drunks should be banned from going into pubs. It is obvious, therefore, that the overwhelming majority of those dissatisfied would like to see harsher measures introduced for dealing with drunks. However, we did find a very small minority group (2% of both men and women) who stated that they thought the punitive approach for dealing with drunks was wrong and that more emphasis should be placed on help and treatment facilities.

Table 11.6 Distribution of informants' views on whether satisfied or dissatisfied with the way drunks are dealt with by how often drunken people are seen in the streets

Views on the way drunks are dealt with	Men						Women					
	Drunken people seen in the streets						Drunken people seen in the streets					
	At least once a week	Once or twice a month	Twice a year or less	Never	Don't know	Total	At least once a week	Once or twice a month	Twice a year or less	Never	Don't know	Total
	%	%	%	%		%	%	%	%	%		%
Satisfied	31	41	38	41	*6.0*	35	30	41	33	33	*6.9*	32
Dissatisfied	60	50	52	49	*7.0*	56	56	41	46	38	*11.4*	48
In some ways satisfied, in some ways dissatisfied	3	2	6	4	-	4	4	5	6	4	-	4
Unsure/not answered	6	6	4	6	*3.0*	6	10	13	15	24	*4.6*	16
Total	100	100	100	100	*	100	100	100	100	100	*	100
Base	*983.1*	*175.0*	*100.0*	*344.0*	*16.0*	*1618.1*	*906.4*	*170.7*	*151.5*	*635.5*	*22.8*	*1886.9*

* *Base too small for percentaging - actual figures given in italics*

Table 11.7

Ways in which informants are dissatisfied with the way drunks are dealt with by sex

Ways in which dissatisfied	Men	Women
	%	%
Punishment should be more severe (eg stiffer penalties, heavier fines)	41	34
Should always be punished (often allowed to go unpunished)	10	10
Drunks should be banned from pubs / publicans should refuse to serve them	4	3
Emphasis should be on help / treatment	2	2
Other	8	5
Don't know / not answered	1	3
Does not apply - (satisfied with the way drunks are dealt with / unsure about views)	41	48
Total	100[ϕ]	100[ϕ]
Base	*1618.1*	*1886.9*

[ϕ] *Percentages do not sum to 100 as informants may give more than one answer*

11.9 Summary

There is widespread awareness of public drunkenness in the streets where informants live: 61% of men and 48% of women report that they have seen incidents of drunkenness at least once a week. The greater frequency with which men observe drunken behaviour in the streets than women can be attributed to the fact that men have more opportunity to do so, since they are more likely to go out to drink in pubs, clubs etc in the vicinity of which most public drunken behaviour probably occurs.

Men and women living in the central belt of Scotland (ie Western, Central and South East regions) tend to observe an above average rate of drunkenness in the streets in their areas.

There are no major differences between regular, occasional and non-drinkers in their rate of observation of public drunkenness in their areas but amongst male regular drinkers we have found that the heaviest drinkers tend to report a higher incidence of drunkenness. (78% of those men who drink 51 or more alcoholic units per week state that they see drunken behaviour in the streets in their areas at least once a week.) Possibly they live in areas where drunkenness is more common or perhaps it is just that they tend to mix more often in heavy drinking and drunken company.

Younger informants tend to report a higher frequency of drunkenness in their areas than older informants. This can probably be accounted for by the former's more frequent attendance at pubs, hotels, clubs etc and, moreover, their greater tendency to go out per se.

The working class (ie manual group) are more likely to observe frequent incidents of drunken behaviour in their areas than the middle class (ie non-manual group). We know that working class informants are more likely to go out to drink in pubs, clubs and hotels whereas middle class informants are more likely to drink at home, so that the former will have more opportunity to observe public drunkenness. However, it can also be argued that this result is a reflection of the types of residential areas in which the two classes live: a predominantly middle class area is less likely to contain many pubs, hotels, clubs etc where people frequently get drunk or to be the sort of area where drunks would congregate.

56% of men and 48% of women are dissatisfied with the way in which drunks are dealt with by the authorities. Amongst men, we found that the greater the amount of alcohol consumed the higher the proportion satisfied with the control of drunks. It is probable that those who drink a lot are those most likely themselves to get drunk so that they might refrain from saying they were dissatisfied because this might imply stricter control of their own drinking behaviour. Another explanation may be found in the fact that those who drink a lot are less likely to disapprove of drunkenness (low score on Factor 4) and so will probably be more tolerant.

Those men and women who observe drunkenness most frequently are, understandably, those who tend to be the most dissatisfied with the way it is currently handled. The vast majority of informants who are dissatisfied with the way drunks are dealt with would like to see stiffer penalties and restrictive measures enforced, such as banning drunks from pubs and hotels. However, there was a very tiny minority, 2% of men and women, who thought that the present punitive approach was wrong and that drunks should be given (more) help and treatment facilities.

12 Public knowledge and experience of alcoholics

12.1 Introduction

Whereas in Chapter 9 we described informants' attitudes towards alcoholism in general, in this chapter we shall be concentrating in detail on informants' specific views about alcoholics and their experience, if any, of people they know who have become alcoholics.

First of all, we asked informants for their definition of the term 'alcoholic' and then we questioned them on whether or not they felt there were any differences between an alcoholic and a heavy drinker. We shall compare the main characteristics given by informants as defining an alcoholic with various official definitions to see to what extent the public view coincides with the official view.

We also enquired about informants' actual experience of alcoholics by asking them if they had ever known personally any people who had become alcoholics. If informants had known, or currently knew, such people we questioned them about the particular characteristics by which they recognised them as alcoholics, the reasons why they became alcoholics (if known) and, finally, whether or not they felt this experience had affected their own drinking behaviour.

In the later sections of this chapter we shall be describing informants' answers to questions about their knowledge of treatment facilities available to alcoholics. This was particularly relevant at the time when our informants were interviewed since the Scottish Health Education Unit had recently run a series of advertising campaigns in the press and on television encouraging the public to consider alcoholism as an illness that can be arrested and giving details of places where treatment was available. We should, therefore, be able to assess the extent of public awareness of treatment facilities and with this information we hope to help health educators judge whether further campaigns are necessary.

12.2 Informants' definition of the term 'alcoholic'

Before describing informants' definitions it is useful to briefly mention some typologies and definitions suggested by experts on alcoholism. There have, in fact, been many attempts to define alcoholism by both researchers and public bodies. One of the prominent founder researchers into alcoholism, Jellinek[1], defined alcoholism as "any use of alcoholic beverages that causes any damage to the individual or society or both". He then proceeded to classify alcoholism into five main types denoted by the first five letters of the Greek alphabet. These were as follows: alpha alcoholism, which he described as excessive drinking which was the result of an underlying psychological illness; beta alcoholism, which he thought of as excessive drinking over a long period of time and that led to actual physical illness such as neuritis and cirrhosis of the liver; gamma alcoholism, which is characterised by patients' 'loss of control' drinking and alcohol withdrawal symptoms; delta alcoholism, which is characterised by 'inability to abstain' from drinking (ie more-or-less continuous drinking) where tolerance to alcohol has become quite marked; lastly, epsilon alcoholism which Jellinek refers to as periodic or bout drinking.

The definition of alcoholism which is most commonly used is the one given by the World Health Organisation (1952) which states that alcoholics are "those excessive drinkers whose dependence on alcohol has attained such a degree that it shows a noticeable mental disturbance or an interference with their bodily and mental health, their interpersonal relations, and their smooth social and economic functioning; or who show the prodromal signs of such development. They therefore require treatment".

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[1] *'The Disease Concept of Alcoholism' - E.M. Jellinek*

It is clear that the main implication behind both the WHO and Jellinek definitions is that excessive drinking by itself is a necessary but not a sufficient condition of alcoholism, for the former must be accompanied by actual physical, social or economic harm to the individual or society or both.

Naturally, we would not expect the general public to be able to give precise definitions of alcoholism particularly when the 'experts' frequently disagree amongst themselves. However, in Table 12.1 we have shown the characteristics of alcoholics in the order of frequency with which they are mentioned by informants.

First of all, it should be noted that 2% of both men and women had absolutely no idea what an alcoholic was. It may seem surprising that there were any such people in view of the common usage of the term but it should be remembered that a survey of the general public covers people at all levels of education and knowledge and, moreover, some members of the public may not understand the term 'alcoholic' but may nevertheless know alcoholics by another, perhaps more colloquial, term. Further analyses showed the group of individuals who did not understand the term alcoholic to be overrepresented amongst non-drinkers and older people. (3% and 6% of male and female non-drinkers, 3% and 4% of men and women over 50 years of age.) We also found that there was a slightly higher proportion who did not understand the term 'alcoholic' in the manual than the non-manual group (2% compared with 1% for both men and women).

Amongst the vast majority of men and women who did understand the term alcoholic the most frequently mentioned characteristic was the notion of 'compulsion to drink'. Examples of the type of answer included in this category seem to closely resemble Jellinek's gamma alcoholism (loss of control) eg *"could not stop drinking", "can't live without a drink", "can't keep away from it - obsessed by drink", "to satisfy desire or craving".* While approximately two-thirds of men and women gave this type of answer another two-fifths stated that alcoholics were characterised by very frequent drinking. Examples are *"drinking 24 hours a day", "in the pubs every day and afternoons and nights", "keeps the stuff at home and always at it even in the mornings".* This type of answer comes very close to Jellinek's delta alcoholism which is characterised by 'inability to abstain'. A considerably smaller proportion, 18% of men and women, specifically mentioned that alcoholics drank an excessive amount. It can be deduced, therefore, that the compulsion to drink and the continuous nature of the drinking are thought by informants to be more important as characteristics of alcoholics than excessive drinking as such.

Quite a high proportion (13% of men and 18% of women) spontaneously stated that alcoholics were sick people who required treatment so that they seem to have accepted the idea that alcoholism is an illness or disease. A further characteristic mentioned by over 10% of informants is that alcoholics can be identified by the fact that the 'whole focus of their life is drink to the exclusion of everything else'. In this category are included those who consider that some aspect of the alcoholic's life is neglected eg job, money, friends, but if neglect of the family was mentioned this was recorded separately as we felt it was of special importance. In fact, 6% of men and 4% of women did consider that alcoholics were characterised by neglect of their families. A further interesting aspect is shown by the fact that 6% of men and 4% of women think that alcoholics are characterised by their consumption of spirits (or mainly drink spirits).

Finally, it should be noted that in their answers informants frequently referred to alcoholics as male, never female, so that it is clear that the popular image of an alcoholic is aa a man. (Of course, this is supported by the available figures on rates of alcoholism but in recent years there has been a rapid rise in the number of female alcoholics[1].)

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[1] *Gloria Litman states in New Behaviour (24 July 1975) - "The ratio usually given of male: female is 6:1 but this is dropping very rapidly to 3:1 and it is estimated that in private practice the ratio may well be 1:1."*

Table 12.1

Characteristics of alcoholics stated by male and female informants when asked to define an alcoholic

Characteristics of alcoholics	Men	Women
	%	%
Compulsion to drink	66	64
Very frequent drinker	41	47
Drinks an excessive amount	18	18
Is a sick person, needs treatment	13	18
Whole focus of life is drink to exclusion of everything else	13	11
Drink is more important than food	6	11
Resorts to any measures to obtain drink	8	8
Neglects family through drinking	6	4
A person who is a spirits drinker	6	4
Evidence of physical/mental deterioration through drinking	6	4
A person who spends most or all of his money on drink	6	4
Other answers and not answered	14	13
Does not apply - Did not understand the term 'alcoholic'	2	2
Total	100$^{\phi}$	100$^{\phi}$
Base	*1618.1*	*1886.9*

$^{\phi}$ *Percentages do not sum to 100 as informants may give more than one answer*

12.3 Informants' views on whether or not there are any differences between alcoholics and heavy drinkers

We wanted to know if informants considered the terms alcoholic and heavy drinker as synonymous and, if not, what they saw as the main differences. In the light of the previous finding that only 18% specifically mentioned drinking excessively as characterising an alcoholic it is not altogether unexpected that we find the vast majority (84% of men, 78% of women) believing that there are differences between an alcoholic and a heavy drinker.

From Tables 12.2A & B which show the distribution of views by current drinking behaviour it can be seen that a slightly higher proportion of men than women consider that there are differences between an alcoholic and a heavy drinker. On the other hand, more women than men state that they do not know whether there are any differences (7% compared with 2%).

The tables also show that the greater the amount of alcohol informants themselves consume the more likely are they to think that alcoholics and heavy drinkers are different. The trend is more marked amongst women than men shown by the fact that there is a quite dramatic rise from 56% of female non-drinkers to 97% of women who consume 11 or more alcoholic units per week believing that there are differences between alcoholics and heavy drinkers. It can be argued that the greater the quantity of alcohol consumed the more knowledgeable informants will be about drinking so that they are more likely to be aware of the differences. On the other hand, a less charitable explanation is that those who consume the greatest amounts of alcohol might feel uncomfortable about saying there are no differences between an alcoholic and a heavy drinker as it might conceivably apply to them (or be likely to apply if they slightly increased their drinking) so that they will feel inclined to state categorically that there are differences.

We also examined any differences in attitude according to age and social class. Amongst both sexes we consistently found that the younger informants were more likely than older informants to consider there were differences between alcoholics and heavy drinkers. It was also evident that the Professional class was more likely than any other social class to take the view that there were differences (92% of men and 95% of women in the Professional class).

12.4 The differences between an alcoholic and a heavy drinker mentioned by informants

From Table 12.3 it is clear that the overwhelming majority of men and women believe that the basic difference between an alcoholic and a heavy drinker is that the latter can control his drinking. Verbatim examples are: *"an alcoholic can't limit it, but a heavy drinker can cut it down if he's got to", "an alcoholic must have a drink but a heavy drinker can leave it alone", "a heavy drinker drinks for pleasure whereas an alcoholic drinks from necessity".*

Two other differences between alcoholics and heavy drinkers were mentioned by at least 5% of male and female informants (who accepted that there were differences). The first is that alcoholics will drink even if they do not have the money and will use any means to obtain drink whereas the heavy drinker will only drink if the money is available. The second difference, given by over 5% of informants, is that alcoholics allow drink to dominate their lives resulting in the neglect of everything else but the heavy drinker does not allow this to happen.

12.5 Informants' personal experience of alcoholics

In order to gain some impression of informants' personal experience of alcoholics we asked them if they had know, or currently knew, personally anyone who they considered to be an alcoholic (see Q.32).

Table 12.2A Men - Whether or not informants think there are any differences between an alcoholic and a heavy drinker, by current drinking behaviour

Whether or not there are differences between an alcoholic and a heavy drinker	Regular drinkers : Number of alcoholic units per week 51+	21-50	11-20	6-10	3-5	1-2	All regular drinkers	Occasional drinkers	Non-drinkers	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes (there are differences)	83	90	84	82	88	84	86	78	74	84
No	13	6	12	13	9	12	10	17	21	12
Don't know / not answered	2	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	3	3
Does not apply - Did not understand the term 'alcoholic'	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	3	3	2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*106.3*	*300.3*	*253.3*	*241.0*	*159.0*	*132.3*	*1192.1*	*349.0*	*77.0*	*1618.1*

Table 12.2B Women - Whether or not informants think there are any differences between an alcoholic and a heavy drinker

Whether or not there are differences between an alcoholic and a heavy drinker	Regular drinkers : Number of alcoholic units per week				All regular drinkers	Occasional drinkers	Non-drinkers	Total
	11+	6-10	3-5	1-2				
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes (there are differences)	97	90	86	80	85	76	56	78
No	-	6	8	13	9	14	25	13
Don't know / not answered	3	4	4	5	5	8	14	7
Does not apply - Did not understand the term 'alcoholic'	-	-	2	2	1	2	6	2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*80.8*	*161.3*	*261.6*	*357.7*	*861.4*	*790.0*	*235.6*	*1886.9*

Table 12.3

Male and female informants' views on the differences between an alcoholic and a heavy drinker

Differences between an alcoholic and a heavy drinker	Men	Women
	%	%
Heavy drinker has ability to stop/control his drinking whereas alcoholic has not	66	67
Heavy drinker uses his own money for drinking, doesn't drink if no money / alcoholic trys any means to get money	8	5
Heavy drinker doesn't let drink dominate his life / alcoholic does - neglects family/job etc.	7	5
Heavy drinker has a lot to drink but alcoholic drinks excessively	4	3
Heavy drinker drinks alcohol whereas alcoholic will drink anything like methylated spirits/hair lacquer etc.	2	2
Heavy drinker is beer drinker, alcoholic more likely to drink spirits	2	1
Heavy drinkers tend to drink in company / alcoholics tend to drink alone	1	2
Heavy drinker still eats normally / alcoholic goes without food	1	1
Other answers	7	8
Only very fine line between alcoholic and heavy drinker[†]	3	3
Don't know or unclear answer[†]	9	14
All who think there are differences between an alcoholic and a heavy drinker	100[φ]	100[φ]
Base	*1350.6*	*1471.0*

[φ] *Percentages do not sum to 100 as informants may give more than ~~one~~ answer*

[†] *Only coded if no other answer given*

In Tables 12.4 A & B we have given the distribution of the number of alcoholics, if any, known personally by informants according to informants' own drinking behaviour. The first point to note about this table is that over a half of all male informants (53%) and over a third of all female informants (37%) knew, or had known, personally at least one alcoholic. These are quite surprisingly high proportions and show that many members of the public are well acquainted with the problem of alcoholism. The fact that men are more likely than women to know alcoholics, however, is not surprising as we know that men tend to both drink a lot more and to mix more in heavy drinking company than women.

It might be expected that those informants who themselves consume a large quantity of alcohol would be the most likely to know alcoholics and in general this hypothesis is supported by the figures in Tables 12.4 A & B. However, there is one notable exception to this trend and that is the group of male non-drinkers who are, in fact, the most likely to know alcoholics. There is, however, no obvious explanation for this result. On the other hand, amongst women, there is a consistent trend showing that the greater the amount of alcohol consumed the more likely are informants to know alcoholics.

We also looked at any differences in personal experience of alcoholics by informants' age and social class. It can be seen from Table 12.5 that amongst both men and women those aged 31-50 are the most likely to know alcoholics. A possible explanation is that the youngest group will not have had the life-time experience of the older groups while those over 51 years of age are probably not acquainted with people involved in the relatively recent rise in rates of alcoholism.

There are some quite large differences in personal experience of alcoholics amongst the social classes. It is clear from Tables 12.6 A & B that both men and women in the Professional and Intermediate classes are more likely than those in the other classes to know alcoholics. It is impossible to say whether this is because there actually is a higher proportion of alcoholics in these two classes or if it is because of differences in perception or knowledge which are manifested in a greater likelihood that those in the Professional and Intermediate classes will identify their friends or acquaintances as alcoholics.

12.6 Characteristics of alcoholics known personally to informants

We decided to concentrate on three main characteristics of the alcoholics known to our informants; firstly, the relationship of the alcoholics to informants, secondly, the characteristics of their behaviour which made informants believe that they were alcoholics and, thirdly, the reasons why informants thought these people had become alcoholics. In analysing this information we have amalgamated data from descriptions of all the alcoholics known to informants except where they knew more than three alcoholics when descriptions were taken only about the three alcoholics they knew best. Thus, the base for the following tables is all alcoholics known to informants.

(i) Relationship of alcoholics to informants

In Table 12.7 we have given the distribution of the relationships of all the alcoholics known personally to informants for men and women separately.

It is immediately obvious that most of the alcoholics known to informants are male - 91% of all the alcoholics known by men and 71% of all the alcoholics known by women. The lower proportion of male alcoholics known by women presumably reflects the social milieu of the two sexes and is reinforced by the fact that women are more likely than men to know female alcoholics.

The male alcoholics known by informants are usually friends or acquaintances although as many as 8% and 15% of those known to men and women respectively were relatives (excluding the immediate family). In fact, 2% and 3% of the alcoholics known to men and women were their fathers or brothers.

Table 12.4A Men - The number of alcoholics known personally to informants by current drinking behaviour

Number of alcoholics known personally to informants	Regular drinkers: Number of alcoholic units per week						All regular drinkers	Occasional drinkers	Non-drinkers	Total
	51+	21-50	11-20	6-10	3-5	1-2				
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Knows 3 or more	18	17	17	13	14	12	16	12	22	15
Knows 2	16	11	9	11	8	11	10	10	13	11
Knows 1	26	25	32	26	26	26	27	27	27	27
Knows at least 1	60	54	58	50	48	49	53	50	62	53
Knows none	39	46	40	48	50	49	45	48	35	45
Does not apply - did not understand the term 'alcoholic'	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	3	3	2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*106.3*	*300.3*	*253.3*	*241.0*	*159.0*	*132.3*	*1192.1*	*349.0*	*77.0*	*1618.1*

Table 12.4B Women - Number of alcoholics known personally to informants by current drinking behaviour

Number of alcoholics known personally to informants	Regular drinkers: Number of alcoholic units per week				All regular drinkers	Occasional drinkers	Non-drinkers	Total
	11+	6-10	3-5	1-2				
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Knows 3 or more	6	8	3	6	5	4	3	5
Knows 2	14	7	6	9	8	7	4	7
Knows 1	28	25	28	31	29	23	17	25
Knows at least 1	48	41	37	45	42	34	24	37
Knows none	52	59	62	53	57	64	70	61
Does not apply - did not understand the term 'alcoholic'	-	-	2	2	1	2	6	2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*80.8*	*161.3*	*261.6*	*357.7*	*861.4*	*790.0*	*235.6*	*1886.9*

Table 12.5 Number of alcoholics known personally to informants by sex and age at the time of interview

Number of alcoholics known personally to informants	Men				Women			
	17 - 30 years	31 - 50 years	51 years and over	All age groups	17 - 30 years	31 - 50 years	51 years and over	All age groups
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Knows 3 or more	11	19	15	15	3	6	4	5
Knows 2	9	13	9	10	8	8	7	7
Knows 1	25	28	28	27	22	29	23	25
Knows at least 1	45	60	52	53	32	43	35	37
Knows none	54	39	45	45	68	56	62	61
Does not apply - did not understand the term 'alcoholic'	1	1	3	2	-	1	4	2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*436.1*	*598.0*	*584.0*	*1618.1*	*493.9*	*606.4*	*782.0*	*1886.9*

Table 12.6A

Men - Number of alcoholics known personally to informants by social class of Head of Household

Number of alcoholics known personally to informants	Professional	Intermediate	Other non-manual	Skilled manual	Semi-and unskilled manual	Housewife	Don't know	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%		%
Knows 3 or more	23	21	15	14	13	7	*3.0*	15
Knows 2	9	13	11	11	8	12	*2.0*	10
Knows 1	33	28	26	27	25	35	*9.0*	27
Knows at least 1	65	63	52	51	46	55	*14.0*	53
Knows none	33	36	47	47	51	45	*13.0*	45
DNA- did not understand the term 'alcoholic'	1	1	-	2	2	-	-	2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	*	100
Base	*75.0*	*270.0*	*182.0*	*648.0*	*375.3*	*40.8*	*27.0*	*1618.1*

** Base is too small for percentaging - actual figures given in italics*

Table 12.6B

Women - Number of alcoholics known personally to informants by social class of Head of Household

Number of alcoholics known personally to informants	Professional	Intermediate	Other non-manual	Skilled manual	Semi- and unskilled manual	Housewife	Don't know	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Knows 3 or more	14	4	5	2	7	6	-	5
Knows 2	8	8	5	9	7	4	13	7
Knows 1	31	33	22	24	21	24	8	25
Knows at least 1	53	45	32	35	36	34	20	37
Knows none	47	55	67	63	61	60	80	61
DNA- did not understand the term 'alcoholic'	-	1	1	2	3	6	-	2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*96.5*	*285.7*	*271.3*	*619.0*	*318.4*	*241.7*	*54.4*	*1886.9*

Table 12.7

Relationship of all alcoholics known to informants by sex

Relationship to informant	Men	Women
	%	%
Spouse	-	-
Father / brother	2	3
Mother / sister	-	1
Other male relatives	8	15
Other female relatives	1	5
Male friends	44	21
Female friends	2	9
Male acquaintances	36	32
Female acquaintances	5	14
All male	91	71
All female	9	28
Total - all alcoholics known	100	100
Base	*1516.3*	*996.8*

In looking at the relationship of the female alcoholics to informants it can be seen that they are most likely to be acquaintances (5% and 14% of the alcoholics known by men and women respectively). It is interesting, however, that as many as 5% of the alcoholics known by women were female relatives but only 1% of those known by men.

Finally, it should be noted that two men and two women actually said that their spouses were alcoholics. (The numbers are too small to appear as percentages in Table 12.7.)

(ii) Characteristics by which the alcoholics were recognized

In Table 12.8 we have given the distribution of all the characteristics by which the alcoholics known to informants were recognised. It can be seen that the main characteristic is their very frequent drinking. This is slightly different

Table 12.8

Characteristics by which the alcoholics known to informants were recognized by sex

Characteristics of alcoholics known to informants	Men	Women
	%	%
Very frequent drinker	47	43
Is having / has had treatment for alcoholism	26	32
Compulsion to drink	21	21
Drinks an excessive amount	20	19
Neglected job / lost job	14	9
Health neglected	10	11
Family neglected	6	7
All money spent on drink	7	4
Resorted to any measure to get alcohol	6	6
Drink is/was more important than food	3	6
Drinks spirits only	10	8
Drinks meths, Brasso etc	2	2
Drinks wine only	3	1
Has bouts of drinking	2	2
It's a known fact / told by alcoholics themselves†	5	8
Don't know†	14	18
Other characteristics	12	16
Total - all alcoholics known	100[ϕ]	100[ϕ]
Base	*1516.3*	*996.3*

[ϕ] *Percentages do not sum to 100 as informants may give more than one answer*

† *Only coded if no other answer given*

from the main characteristic given when informants defined the term 'alcoholic' which was 'compulsion to drink' (see Table 12.1). The most probable explanation is that informants have to judge people they know by their actual behaviour and very frequent drinking is an easily observable sign whereas it is more difficult to assess compulsion.

As many as 26% of all the alcoholics known by men and 32% of all the alcoholics known by women were recognizable because they had actually had treatment for alcoholism. A further 5% and 8% of all the alcoholics known by men and women were generally known to be alcoholics or, in fact, the alcoholics themselves had admitted their problem.

The many other recognizable characteristics of alcoholics known to informants can be seen in Table 12.8. It is finally worth noting that nearly a tenth of all the alcoholics known were characterised in the eyes of informants by their consumption of spirits only.

(iii) Reasons why informants thought those concerned had become alcoholics

From Table 12.9, where we have listed the reasons why informants thought those concerned had become alcoholics, it is clear that a large proportion of informants did not know the reasons (37% and 42% of all the alcoholics known to men and women respectively). However, the reason most frequently mentioned was that the drinking was because of unhappy domestic circumstances. Other reasons frequently given were that people had started drinking because they had the money and then found they couldn't stop, they had a personality problem, they were influenced by friends who drank a lot and they were involved in a job connected with drinking (eg barman).

We should be cautious about these results as some of these reasons may be considered as effects of drinking rather than causes but, nevertheless, it is important that these were the main reasons seen by informants as the background to the onset of alcoholism amongst people they knew.

12.7 Effect on informants' drinking of knowing alcoholics

In the final part of Q.31 we asked informants whether their personal acquaintanceship with each alcoholic had affected their own drinking. It is clear from Table 12.10 that the overwhelming majority (85%) of those who know, or knew, personally any alcoholics were affected by it and consequently reduced or were put off drinking to some extent. In fact two women and one man said that knowing the particular alcoholic had actually made them give up drinking altogether. Only 12% and 11% of men and women respectively who knew alcoholics categorically stated that this knowledge had no effect at all on their own drinking. However, there is a clear trend in the table showing that the more alcoholics known by informants the more likely are they to state that their own drinking has *not* been affected - perhaps they have become more conditioned to it (remembering, of course, that it is still the majority who said that their drinking has been affected).

12.8 Informants' views on treatment for alcoholics

We asked all informants in Q.31 whether they thought a person should do anything if they thought that someone in his or her family was becoming an alcoholic. It can be said that this is a loaded question which will inevitably invite the socially acceptable answer that the hypothetical person should do something but the purpose of the question was basically to lead into the subsequent question - "What should they do about it?" [Q.31(a)] - which would provide information on informants' knowledge of aid and treatment facilities available to alcoholics.

Table 12.9

Reasons why informants thought those concerned had become alcoholics by sex

Reasons why became alcoholics	Men	Women
	%	%
Unhappy domestic circumstances	12	18
Too much money / could afford to drink	7	8
Had personality problem	7	6
Influence of friends who drank a lot	7	6
Easy access to drink, job connected with drink (eg barman)	7	4
Drank as part of job (eg business lunch)	4	2
Pressure of work / business pressures	4	4
Drank through loneliness	4	6
Influence of parents / relatives who drank a lot	3	5
Brought up to drink, started young	2	2
Drank through boredom	3	2
Had an illness or injury which led to taking up drinking	2	2
Developed habit / acquired taste†	5	5
Don't know†	37	42
Other	4	3
Total - all alcoholics known	100$^{\phi}$	100$^{\phi}$
Base	*1516.3*	*996.8*

ϕ *Percentages do not sum to 100 as informants may give more than one answer*

† *Only coded if no other answer given*

However, it is worth noting from Tables 12.11 A & B that although the overwhelming majority of men and women did accept that the hypothetical person should do something 4% and 2% of men and women respectively took the view that the person should do nothing and a further 1% of both sexes felt that there was nothing that could be done

Table 12.10 Effect on informants' drinking of personally knowing alcoholic(s) by number of alcoholics known

Effects on informants' drinking of personally knowing alcoholic(s)	Men : Number of alcoholics known				Women : Number of alcoholics known			
	1	2	3 or more	All those knowing alcoholics	1	2	3 or more	All those knowing alcoholics
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
No effect	8	12	20	12	8	15	21	11
Reduced drinking / put off drinking	90	86	76	85	88	83	68	85
Other	1	1	3	2	2	2	10	3
Not answered	1	1	-	-	2	-	-	1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*441.3*	*170.0*	*245.0*	*733.8*	*466.5*	*135.2*	*86.6*	*688.4*

Table 12.11A Men - Whether or not a person should do anything if they think that someone in their family is becoming an alcoholic by current drinking behaviour

Whether or not a person should do something	Regular drinkers : Number of alcoholic units per week						All regular drinkers	Occasional drinkers	Non-drinkers	Total
	51+	21-50	11-20	6-10	3-5	1-2				
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes, should do something	86	97	94	95	94	95	94	89	87	93
No, do nothing	11	2	4	2	2	3	3	5	6	4
There's nothing anyone can do about it	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	4	1
Don't know, depends on circumstances, not answered	1	-	1	1	1	1	1	2	-	1
Does not apply - did not understand the term 'alcoholic'	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	3	3	2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*106.3*	*300.3*	*253.3*	*241.0*	*159.0*	*132.3*	*1192.1*	*349.0*	*77.0*	*1618.1*

Table 12.11B Women - Whether or not a person should do anything if they think that someone in their family is becoming an alcoholic by current drinking behaviour

Whether or not a person should do something	Regular drinkers : Number of alcoholic units per week 11+	6-10	3-5	1-2	All regular drinkers	Occasional drinkers	Non-drinkers	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes, should do something	100	97	92	93	94	92	89	93
No, do nothing	-	-	1	3	2	3	-	2
There's nothing anyone can do about it	-	-	1	1	1	1	2	1
Don't know, depends on circumstances, not answered	-	3	4	1	2	3	3	2
Does not apply - did not understand the term 'alcoholic'	-	-	2	2	2	2	6	2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*80.8*	*161.3*	*261.6*	*357.7*	*861.4*	*790.0*	*235.6*	*1886.9*

It is also interesting to note that there is a slight trend which shows that the greater the amount of alcohol consumed the more likely are informants to take the view that something should be done by the person. There is one major exception to this trend, however, and that is our heaviest drinking group of men amongst whom 11% feel that nothing should be done. (Perhaps they feel that no-one else should interfere as it is a personal problem which might affect them in the future.)

The list of answers to the subsidiary question "What should they do about it?" are given in Table 12.12 for men and women separately. Almost a half of each sex

Table 12.12

What should be done if know someone who is an alcoholic by sex

What should be done?	Men	Women
	%	%
Advise alcoholic to see the doctor/psychiatrist	45	49
Get them to seek treatment in a special clinic/unit/ hospital for alcoholics	2	2
Contact Alcoholics Anonymous	4	5
Contact minister or religious organisation	3	3
Contact some other professional person/organisation	11	14
Try to get them to stop drinking / limit their access to drink	26	21
Point out harmful effects	15	9
Find out reasons for their drinking	10	12
Find something else for them to do / take their mind off drink	5	6
Seek treatment (not elsewhere specified)	4	4
Talk to them / advise them (vague)†	10	12
Don't know / never been faced with it†	2	4
Other	5	4
Does not apply - nothing can be done	4	2
Does not apply - did not understand the term 'alcoholic'	2	2
Not answered	1	3
Total	100$^{\phi}$	100$^{\phi}$
Base	*1618.1*	*1886.9*

$^{\phi}$ *Percentages do not sum to 100 as informants may give more than one answer*

† *Only coded if no other answer given*

mentioned that the alcoholic should be advised to see a doctor and a further 2% specifically mentioned that they should seek treatment in a special alcoholic unit/clinic. Other people and organisations who it was felt that the alcoholics should be advised to contact were Alcoholics Anonymous and priests, ministers or religious organisations.

Apart from contacting people and organisations at least a fifth of men and women felt that the hypothetical person should try to stop the alcoholic from drinking and generally limit their access to alcohol. Over 10% thought that the harmful effects of alcohol should be pointed out to alcoholics and another 10% considered that the person should try to find out the reasons for their drinking.

Finally we asked informants in Q.31(b) if they knew of anywhere else an alcoholic could go for help, to ensure that we obtained a complete picture of informants' knowledge of the treatment facilities available to alcoholics. Those who thought that nothing should be done at the original question (Q.31) were also asked this question with an alternative wording (ie 'where' instead of 'anywhere else') so that we could find out their state of knowledge. The answers given in the previous question [Q.31(a)] relating to places, persons or organisations were added to those from this question so that Table 12.13 shows all the places/persons/organisations mentioned by informants.

Approximately 60% of men and women specifically mentioned Alcoholics Anonymous so that it can be concluded that it is a well known organisation. Just over 60% of both sexes said that an alcoholic could go to a doctor for help. The Samaritans are also recognized as an organisation which can help alcoholics - mentioned by 14% and 15% of men and women respectively. Approximately 12% of all informants were aware of the fact that there were special clinics for alcoholics where they could go for help. Besides mentioning that an alcoholic could contact a minister or priest some informants also mentioned religious organisations like the Salvation Army and Church Army.

From further analyses we noticed that the greater the amount of alcohol consumed the more likely were informants to know about organisations like Alcoholics Anonymous and Samaritans.

12.9 Summary

98% of men and women were aware of the term 'alcoholic' and were able to attempt some sort of definition. The notion of 'compulsion to drink' was the main characteristic informants associated with alcoholics and the next most common characteristic mentioned was very frequent drinking.

The vast majority (84% of men, 78% of women) took the view that there were differences between alcoholics and heavy drinkers. We also found that those who drink the greatest quantities of alcohol are the most likely to consider that there are differences between an alcoholic and a heavy drinker. This may simply reflect a greater awareness about drinking on their part but is more likely to be a concern that they should not be considered as alcoholics, or potential alcoholics, although possibly the term heavy drinker is acceptable. The basic difference between an alcoholic and a heavy drinker in the eyes of informants is that the latter can control his drinking while the former cannot.

As many as 53% of men and 37% of women claimed that they knew, or had known, personally someone who was an alcoholic. In fact 15% of men and 5% of women knew personally at least three alcoholics. It is clear, therefore, that many members of the Scottish public are well acquainted with the problem of alcoholism. In general, the greater the amount of alcohol consumed the more likely are informants to know personally any alcoholics. Those in the middle age group, 31-50, and those in the Professional and Intermediate classes seem to have a greater than average chance of knowing alcoholics.

Table 12.13

Places, persons or organisations mentioned by informants where an alcoholic can go for help by sex

Places / persons / organisations	Men	Women
	%	%
Alcoholics Anonymous	61	58
Doctor	61	62
Special clinics / centres / homes / rehabititation centres for alcoholics	12	11
General hospital	9	9
Psychiatrist / mental home	7	7
Priest / minister / church	16	16
Religious organisations (eg Salvation Army, Church Army, YMCA)	6	3
Samaritans	14	15
Other social or welfare organisations / workers	6	4
Don't know names of places but know they exist†	2	1
Other places / persons	6	5
Don't know / not answered†	11	13
Does not apply - did not understand the term 'alcoholic'	2	2
Total	100[ϕ]	100[ϕ]
Base	*1618.1*	*1886.9*

[ϕ] *Percentages do not sum to 100 as informants may give more than one answer*

† *Only coded if no other answer given*

Most of the alcoholics known personally by informants are male - 91% of all the alcoholics known by men and 71% of all those known by women. This difference between men and women is presumably a result of the fact that each sex is most likely to know alcoholics of its own sex even though overall male alcoholics are much more common than female alcoholics. The majority of the alcoholics known to informants were friends or acquaintances but it should be noted that 2% and 3% of those known to men and women respectively were their fathers or brothers and two male and female informants actually mentioned that their spouses were alcoholics. Informants recognized the fact that these people were alcoholics mainly because of their very frequent drinking and because they had actually received treatment for alcoholism.

When asked why they thought these people had become alcoholics over a third of informants did not know but, amongst those who did know, the chief reasons given were unhappy domestic circumstances, influence of friends who drank a lot and personality problems. The acquaintanceship with these alcoholics seems to have had quite a dramatic effect on informants' own drinking since 85% said they had either reduced their drinking or been put off drinking to some extent.

The overwhelming majority of informants said that a person should do something if they thought someone in their family was becoming an alcoholic. Almost a half of each sex thought that the alcoholic should be advised to see a doctor or psychiatrist. A fifth of informants felt that the person should actually try to make the alcoholic stop drinking and limit his/her access to drink. When we asked informants to name all the places where they knew an alcoholic could go for help approximately 60% mentioned Alcoholics Anonymous and the same proportion said that an alcoholic could go to a doctor. The Samaritans seems to be fairly well known as an organisation which can provide help for alcoholics as it was mentioned by 14% and 15% of men and women. It should be noted that 12% of informants knew of the existence of special clinics/units/hospitals for alcoholics and many actually mentioned them by name. We also found that those most involved in drinking themselves were the most likely to mention places like Alcoholics Anonymous and the Samaritans.

13 Characteristics of groups with a high incidence of heavy drinking

13.1 Introduction

One of the most important aims of this survey was to establish which groups of informants might be thought of as 'at risk' because of their heavy drinking and to which it would be most appropriate to direct health education communications. Not all heavy drinkers are destined to become alcoholics but the evidence from other studies suggests that alcoholics are recruited from amongst those who have been heavy drinkers. An important goal of health education is primary prevention, ie attacking the problem of alcoholism at its roots, so that if particular groups are known to be prone to heavy drinking, then measures can be taken to make heavy drinking seem unattractive to such 'prone' individuals before the habit has become fully developed or, at least, to dissuade them from continuing to drink at such a high level.

For the purpose of this chapter we chose to define heavy drinkers as those individuals who currently consume 51 or more alcoholic units per week. This is necessarily a rather arbitrary cut-off point but it seemed reasonable to accept this as a high level of drinking as other research has indicated that this level is very likely to cause a person 'trouble'[1]. Moreover, it is to some extent endorsed by the general public whose own estimate of the amounts that constituted heavy drinking were only slightly higher[2]. Although some of those who consume 51 or more alcoholic units per week may never become alcoholics it is still justifiable to consider these people as 'at risk' since their level of alcoholic intake if maintained is likely to result in damage to their health and most likely involve a considerable drain, both social and financial, on their families' resources. We therefore decided to look at a whole range of social, demographic and attitudinal factors in order to find out which particular groups contained high proportions of heavy drinkers and thus, amongst whom, it would be most useful to concentrate health education communications.

13.2 Selection of variables for the analysis

It was decided to carry out this analysis amongst men only as we knew that the group we have defined as heavy drinkers was composed entirely of men[3]. [As the analysis was to be amongst men it was possible to use the unweighted sample since reweighting for men only occurs in the case of young persons in the supplementary sample and their numbers are negligible[4] (base is 1613 instead of 1618.1). The main advantage with an unweighted sample is that statistical tests can easily be applied.]

As a first step we considered including in the analysis all the social and demographic variables which were found to be associated with consumption of an above average amount by men (see Table 3.17 p 61). However, where variables were very similar in meaning we chose those which had been shown to be most efficient in identifying members of the heavy drinking sub-group, eg the proportion of male friends who drank that were heavy drinkers rather than the basic proportion of male friends who drank. The final selection of these variables was as follows; social class, age at time of interview, area of residence, religious affiliation, smoking behaviour and proportion of friends who drink that are heavy drinkers.

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[1] *Griffith Edwards et al state that "a weekly consumption above that level (25 pints of beer a week) carries for a man a 70% chance of serious trouble". ('Correlates of trouble with drinking amongst men', Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcoholism, May 1972, p.116.)*

[2] *See Section 7.7 p.155*

[3] *See Section 3.3 p.41*

[4] *See Technical Sampling Report p. 307.*

On the basis of the results in Chapters 4 and 5 we decided to also include frequency of father's drinking (when informants were young) and age at the start of drinking as normal behaviour. However, the particular aspects of drinking habits shown to be associated with a high rate of alcoholic consumption in Chapter 6, eg beverage usually consumed, place of drinking etc were deliberately excluded from the analysis as we felt that they could only be regarded as consequences rather than causes of heavy drinking. In other words, we felt that these aspects simply described the heavy drinking habit after it had arisen, and were not characteristics which would help to identify the groups who might have a high incidence of heavy drinking.

The final set of variables included in this analysis were the main attitudinal measures, represented by factor scores, that were found to be highly correlated with amount consumed. These were two of the three types of motivation for drinking, ie psychological affect and intrinsic enjoyment, and three of the four main attitudes towards drinking ie moral disapproval of drinking and disapproval of drunkenness (inversely correlated with amount drunk) and the belief that drinking is pleasurable. As we have previously mentioned it can be argued that these attitudes are adopted after the development of the drinking habit rather than being a cause of it or, indeed, that the causal effects are reciprocal in that behaviour and attitudes reinforce each other. However, it is very likely that the attitudes will be very strong contributors to the maintenance of the habit and should therefore be included in this analysis since health educators will need to be concerned with changing attitudes.

It was necessary to simplify all these variables to dichotomies in order to provide statistical scope for examining their joint contribution to the incidence of heavy drinking. All the factor scores were dichotomised at their means (for all men) so that we have groups of HIGH and LOW scorers. The other variables were dichotomised in such a way as to provide the best distinction between groups with an above average proportion of heavy drinkers and others while preserving a reasonably large and conceptually well-defined group. In Table 13.1 we have shown the proportions of heavy drinkers in each category of the thirteen variables selected for the analysis. The horizontal dotted line across the middle of the table shows in each case how the variable was dichotomised.

13.3 Results of the analysis

It soon became clear that optimal results could be obtained by using five of the available 'predictor' variables in combination. The best discrimination between groups in terms of the proportions of heavy drinkers which they contained was given by the table comprising the following five variables:-

i Social class
ii Age at the time of interview
iii Proportion of male friends who are heavy drinkers
iv Frequency of father's drinking
v Smoking behaviour.

The table has been diagrammatically presented in Fig.13 which shows the change in the proportion of heavy drinkers as each variable is added. The diagram has been ordered in such a way that the upper category (on the page) of each variable is the one with the higher proportion of heavy drinkers. By looking at the top row we can identify a steep rise in the percentage of heavy drinkers as each variable is added. Thus, we find the exceedingly high proportion of 83% of heavy drinkers amongst those men in the manual class, aged between 17 and 30, whose male friends who drink are most likely to be heavy drinkers, whose fathers drank frequently when informants were young and who are themselves heavy smokers. However, it should be remembered that the actual number of heavy drinkers in this group is only 5 which constitutes only a very small proportion (5%) of all the heavy drinkers. At the other extreme, we find that there are no heavy drinkers

Table 13.1

Variables selected for the analysis of heavy drinking
(Lines denote where variables were dichotomised)

I Social and demographic variables

1 Age at the time of interview

Age at time of interview	% of heavy drinkers	*Base*
17-30	12%	*431*
31-50	7%	*598*
51+	2%	*584*
All men	6%	*1613*

2 Social class of Head of Household

Social class		% of heavy drinkers	*Base*
Non-manual	Professional	3%	*75*
	Intermediate	4%	*270*
	Other non-manual	3%	*182*
Manual	Skilled manual	8%	*648*
	Semi and unskilled manual	10%	*374*
	Don't know/Not answered	*	*27*
	Housewife	18%	*37*
	All men	6%	*1613*

* *Base too small for percentaging*

Table 13.1 (cont)

3 Proportion of male friends who drink that are heavy drinkers

Proportion of male friends who drink that are heavy drinkers	% of heavy drinkers	*Base*
All/most	28%	*100*
About half	12%	*199*
Few	4%	*701*
None	3%	*599*
All men	6%	*1613*

4 Smoking behaviour

Amount smoked per day	% of heavy drinkers	*Base*
25+	18%	*204*
20-24	6%	*273*
15-19	8%	*179*
10-14	6%	*181*
5-9	1%	*106*
Up to 4	5%	*87*
Smokers, but amount not given	*	*23*
Non-smoker	4%	*560*
All men	6%	*1613*

* *Base too small for percentaging*

Table 13.1 (cont)

5 Area of residence

Area of residence		% of heavy drinkers	*Base*
Major cities	Clydeside connurbation	6%	*278*
	Glasgow	8%	*245*
	Edinburgh	12%	*139*
	Aberdeen and Dundee	7%	*124*
	Urban	6%	*426*
	Rural	4%	*401*
	All men	6%	*1613*

6 Church attendance

Attends church	% of heavy drinkers	*Base*
At least once a week	3%	*877*
At least once a month	1%	*113*
Less than once a month	6%	*344*
Never	8%	*181*
Does not apply - no religious affiliation	9%	*690*
All men	6%	*1613*

Table 13.1 (cont)

II Drinking history variables

7 Father's frequency of drinking

Father drank	% of heavy drinkers	*Base*
4 or more times a week	13%	*198*
2-3 times a week	9%	*288*
About once a week	6%	*348*
Less than once a week	5%	*350*
Did not drink (Father deceased / Not answered)	4%	*429*
All men	6%	*1613*

8 Age at the start of drinking as normal behaviour

Age	% of heavy drinkers	*Base*
17 or under	17%	*258* †
18 or over	5%	*1164*
No age given	-	*191*
All men	6%	*1613*

† *The division here was based on the interpretation of the variable. It was split at 18 because those under 18 have started drinking under the legal age for drinking in public places.*

Table 13.1 (cont)

III Attitudinal variables
(All variables dichotomised at mean for all men)

9 Psychological affect (motivation for drinking)

Psychological affect	% of heavy drinkers	*Base*
High (score > 0.08)	13%	*510*
Low (score ⩽ 0.08)	4%	*1020*
Non-drinker/Not answered	-	*83*
All men	6%	*1613*

10 Intrinsic enjoyment (motivation for drinking)

Intrinsic enjoyment	% of heavy drinkers	*Base*
High (score > 0.32)	9%	*798*
Low (score ⩽ 0.32)	4%	*732*
Non-drinker/Not answered	-	*83*
All men	6%	*1613*

11 Moral disapproval (attitude towards drinking)

Moral disapproval	% of heavy drinkers	*Base*
High (score > 0.28)	4%	*859*
Low (score ⩽ 0.28)	9%	*727*
Not answered	-	*27*
All men	6%	*1613*

Table 13.1 (cont)

12 Drinking is pleasurable (attitude towards drinking)

Drinking is pleasurable	% of heavy drinkers	*Base*
High (score > 0.28)	9%	*854*
Low (score ⩽ 0.28)	3%	*732*
Not answered	-	*27*
All men	6%	*1613*

13 Disapproval of drunkenness (attitude towards drinking)

Disapproval of drunkenness	% of heavy drinkers	*Base*
High (score > -0.23)	4%	*851*
Low (score ⩽ -0.23)	9%	*735*
Not answered	-	*27*
All men	6%	*1613*

amongst men in the non-manual class aged 31 or over, whose male friends who drink are unlikely to be heavy drinkers, whose fathers did not drink when informants were young and who are not themselves heavy smokers.

From the point of view of health education communications the group of men aged 17-30 in the manual class are probably of most relevance. 15% of this group are heavy drinkers (compared to the average of 6%) but at the same time they constitute almost half of all the heavy drinkers so that campaigns directed at them might yield fruitful results.

We also tested this five variable model on the Generalized Linear Interactive Modelling Program (GLIM)[1] to see whether a main effects model was adequate or whether there were any interactions between the variables. The analysis was carried out by supposing that the estimated proportion [transformed onto a logit scale, ie log $\left(\frac{P}{1-p}\right)$] of heavy drinkers is a linear function of parameters representing main effects (ie the five variables age, social class, proportion of male friends who drink that are heavy drinkers, frequency of father's drinking, and smoking behaviour). The deviance, which is a measure of the adequacy of fit of the model and is distributed approximately as X^2 was 28.75 with 26 degrees of freedom which indicated that we could accept that a main effects only model was adequate. Furthermore, all the parameter estimates, shown in Table 13.2, were large compared with their standard errors, from which we could conclude that each variable was significant and that this five variable model should be accepted. The size of each parameter estimate indicates the relative importance of the corresponding variable so that the best predictor of heavy drinking is the informant's smoking behaviour followed by the proportion of his male friends who drink that are heavy drinkers and his age at the time of interview.

Table 13.2

Parameter estimates for the 5 variable main effects model (GLIM)

	Parameter	Estimate	Standard Error
1	Smoking behaviour	1.525	0.249
2	Proportion of male friends who drink that are heavy drinkers	1.337	0.229
3	Age at the time of interview	1.222	0.231
4	Social class	0.783	0.286
5	Frequency of father's drinking	0.677	0.227
	Constant	3.256	0.338

GLIM also gives the proportions of heavy drinkers we would expect to find in each cell if the model were a perfect fit and these are given alongside the observed proportions in Table 13.3. The expected proportions can be regarded as the best estimates of the actual proportions of heavy drinkers that would be found on average from a series of random samples of men in Scotland (given the validity of the main effects model). Thus, in our group which is most 'at risk' ie men in the manual class aged 17-30, at least half of whose male drinking friends are heavy drinkers, whose fathers drank at least twice a week and who themselves are heavy smokers, we would expect to find that 68% were heavy drinkers. The expected proportion of heavy drinkers in the manual class aged 17-30 is, in fact, the same as the actual proportion found (15%).

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[1] *GLIM was developed by the Working Party on Statistical Computing of the Royal Statistical Society - see Applied Statistics pp 259-261, Vol.24 No.2 1975.*

Table 13.3
Observed versus expected proportions of heavy drinkers within cells defined by social class, age, proportion of male friends who are heavy drinkers, father's drinking habits, and smoking behaviour

Social class	Age	Proportion of male friends who drink that are heavy drinkers	Father's drinking	Smoking behaviour				Total	
				Heavy smoker		Not heavy smoker			
				O	E	O	E	O	E
Manual	17-30	At least half male friends heavy drinkers	At least twice a week	83%	68%	25%	32%	35%	38%
			Less than twice a week	43%	52%	21%	19%	26%	26%
		Less than half male friends heavy drinkers	At least twice a week	-	36%	11%	11%	10%	13%
			Less than twice a week	30%	22%	7%	6%	9%	7%
	31+	At least half male friends heavy drinkers	At least twice a week	29%	39%	14%	10%	18%	18%
			Less than twice a week	19%	24%	7%	6%	10%	10%
		Less than half male friends heavy drinkers	At least twice a week	25%	14%	4%	3%	7%	5%
			Less than twice a week	5%	8%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Non-manual	17-30	At least half male friends heavy drinkers	At least twice a week	-	50%	22%	18%	20%	26%
			Less than twice a week	100%	33%	20%	10%	27%	12%
		Less than half male friends heavy drinkers	At least twice a week	-	20%	5%	5%	5%	6%
			Less than twice a week	-	12%	3%	3%	3%	4%
	31+	At least half male friends heavy drinkers	At least twice a week	33%	22%	-	6%	8%	10%
			Less than twice a week	30%	13%	-	3%	8%	6%
		Less than half male friends heavy drinkers	At least twice a week	22%	7%	-	2%	2%	2%
			Less than twice a week	4%	4%	-	1%	-	11%
			TOTAL	4%	4%	18%	18%	6%	6%

13.4 Implications for health education

We have found that groups containing certain social and demographic characteristics have a very high incidence of heavy drinking. Each of the five characteristics mentioned above is important in its own right but together they combine to define a group amongst whom the norm would be to drink heavily.

The two demographic characteristics associated with a high incidence of heavy drinking, ie aged 17-30 and following a manual occupation, seem to be particularly important for health educators as they constitute a fairly large and easily identifiable group at whom communications could be directed. Since we have also found that father's frequency of drinking is an important predictor of heavy drinking it should be borne in mind that in any family where the father drinks frequently his sons are potentially 'at risk' of becoming heavy drinkers.

The finding that those men who drink heavily have a high proportion of male friends who also drink heavily is not very surprising since we might expect them to select friends whose habits are similar to their own. However, it also seems very likely that those who have friends, amongst whom heavy drinking is common, feel under social pressure to conform to the group and so start to drink heavily. In either case, the friends will act as strong reinforcers of their current heavy drinking behaviour. There is evidence from other studies[1] that young men gain considerable status in the eyes of their friends if they are able to 'hold' their drink and it seems likely that the whole perceived image of the heavy drinker would have to be altered before any change in behaviour could be expected. An argument that heavy drinking is damaging to health might receive little credence from a group of otherwise healthy young men who are deriving considerable kudos from their drinking behaviour.

Finally we have found out that the best single predictor of heavy drinking is being a heavy smoker (ie smoking at least 25 cigarettes a day). It is obvious that those who do both smoke and drink heavily are putting their health at risk on both counts and are most in need of health education communications.

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[1] *Davies & Stacey - Teenagers & Alcohol.*

Fig. 13 Men - Changes in the proportion who are heavy drinkers as the sample is split into groups according to social class, age, proportion of male friends who drink that are heavy drinkers, father's frequency of drinking, and smoking behaviour

	Social class	Age	Proportion of male friends who drink that are heavy drinkers	Father's frequency of drinking			Smoking behaviour		
All men 6% *1549*	Manual 8% *1022*	17-30 15% *264*	At least half male friends heavy drinkers 30% *69*	At least twice a week	35%	*34*	Heavy smoker	83%	*6*
							Not heavy smoker	25%	*28*
				Less than twice a week	26%	*35*	Heavy smoker	43%	*7*
							Not heavy smoker	21%	*28*
			Less than half male friends heavy drinkers 9% *195*	At least twice a week	10%	*59*	Heavy smoker	-	*4*
							Not heavy smoker	11%	*55*
				Less than twice a week	9%	*136*	Heavy smoker	30%	*10*
							Not heavy smoker	7%	*126*
		31+ 5% *758*	At least half male friends heavy drinkers 13% *159*	At least twice a week	18%	*66*	Heavy smoker	29%	*17*
							Not heavy smoker	14%	*49*
				Less than twice a week	10%	*93*	Heavy smoker	19%	*21*
							Not heavy smoker	7%	*72*
			Less than half male friends heavy drinkers 3% *599*	At least twice a week	7%	*167*	Heavy smoker	25%	*24*
							Not heavy smoker	4%	*143*
				Less than twice a week	2%	*432*	Heavy smoker	5%	*41*
							Not heavy smoker	2%	*391*
	Non-manual 3% *527*	17-30 7% *133*	At least half male friends heavy drinkers 24% *21*	At least twice a week	20%	*10*	Heavy smoker	-	*1*
							Not heavy smoker	22%	*9*
				Less than twice a week	27%	*11*	Heavy smoker	100%	*1*
							Not heavy smoker	20%	*10*
			Less than half male friends heavy drinkers 4% *112*	At least twice a week	5%	*40*	Heavy smoker	-	*3*
							Not heavy smoker	5%	*37*
				Less than twice a week	3%	*72*	Heavy smoker	-	*11*
							Not heavy smoker	3%	*61*
		31+ 2% *394*	At least half male friends heavy drinkers 8% *48*	At least twice a week	8%	*12*	Heavy smoker	33%	*3*
							Not heavy smoker	-	*9*
				Less than twice a week	8%	*36*	Heavy smoker	30%	*10*
							Not heavy smoker	-	*26*
			Less than half male friends heavy drinkers 1% *346*	At least twice a week	2%	*81*	Heavy smoker	22%	*9*
							Not heavy smoker	-	*72*
				Less than twice a week	-	*265*	Heavy smoker	4%	*27*
							Not heavy smoker	-	*238*

Appendices

A Measuring individual drinking behaviour

A.1 Validity of taking 'last week's' drinking as a measure of a typical week's drinking

The aim of this study was to obtain very detailed information on drinking habits relating not only to the amount of alcohol consumed but also to such things as the types of beverage drunk, the place of drinking, the company with whom drinks are usually taken etc.

There are basically two ways in which the data can be collected; either informants can be asked to generalize about their 'typical', 'normal' or 'average' drinking behaviour or they can be asked to recall their actual drinking occasions over a fairly short period of time. With the latter method the specific time period is treated as a representative sample of their general drinking behaviour.

Many researchers into drinking behaviour have used the former approach, most notably Cahalan et al who use a Quantity-Frequency-Variability Index[1], but after full consideration, consultation with the S.H.E.U., and exploratory fieldwork, we decided to adopt the latter method. We have, therefore, based our estimates of drinking behaviour on 'last week's' (ie the week prior to the day of interview) drinking in which details of every drinking occasion are recorded. The main advantages of gathering data by this method are as follows:-

1. Information is based on a factual record of a week's drinking rather than on informants' judgments of what constitutes typical drinking behaviour. It has been shown that informants are not generally capable of giving reliable and unbiased answers about their own 'average', 'typical' or 'normal' behaviour. This bias is compounded when there is a conscious or unconscious motive to minimise or exaggerate the behaviour, which is likely to be the case with drinking behaviour. It was therefore decided that a measure based on a detailed factual record would be more reliable and less prone to bias.

2. On a more practical note it is much easier for informants to recall details of events that actually occurred 'last week' rather than to generalize about such things as the company with whom drinks are usually taken, the places involved, the frequency or quantity in which all types of beverages are consumed etc. (It should also be noted that the interviewers' task is made easier as the information is obtained in a more natural and compact way by asking about 'last week's' events rather than asking a series of questions concerning how often informants usually drink in a pub, drink beer, drink 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or more pints at each occasion etc.)

3. More detailed analyses can be carried out using a factual record of drinking occasions since it is possible to relate two or more aspects at the same time eg. the number of drinking occasions which both take place in a pub and involve all-male company, the number of drinking occasions which take place in informants' own home and involve relatives only, and so on.

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[1] *'American Drinking Practices' - Cahalan, Cisin & Crossley, pp.17*

4. Only those who drank at all 'last week' were asked for details of where they drank etc so that the majority of informants who drink a little are relieved of the burden of answering a considerable number of questions which appear only marginally relevant to them.

The main disadvantages of using 'last week's' drinking are:-

1. 'Last week's' drinking may have been atypical of informants' usual drinking behaviour. We tried to counteract this by choosing the dates of fieldwork so that no major holiday periods were covered, ie mid September to early December. However, 'last week' might still have been a special week for some informants and so we have tried to cater for this at Qs. 11 and 12. (Details of the results of these questions are given in Section A.2.)

2. Some informants may not have regular drinking habits, eg those whose spells of heavy drinking are separated by periods of relative abstinence. However, evidence from other studies[1] suggests that 'heavy infrequent' drinkers are relatively rare. It is likely, however, that there may be misclassification of those who only drink a little since it could be a matter of chance whether or not they happended to drink 'last week'. However, a certain haziness about the dividing line between very light 'regular' drinkers and 'occasional' drinkers does not seem to be too serious.

A major problem in any drinking survey is informants' underestimation of the amount they drink. Both methods are prone to this type of error but it can be argued that it is more difficult to underestimate one's drinking when one is asked to describe actual events that occurred 'last week' than when asked for an impressionistic judgment of one's 'typical' or 'usual' drinking behaviour. We tried to safeguard still further against tendencies to understatement by first asking informants whether or not they had drunk on each day 'last week' and then asking for details about each drinking occasion mentioned. (If we had immediately asked for details when a drinking occasion was given, informants might have deliberately omitted later drinking occasions in order to avoid the subsequent questions.)

A.2 The adjustment of measures based on 'last week's' drinking

Our reasons for basing our measures of individual drinking behaviour on a detailed record of 'last week's' drinking have already been explained. Having made this decision, we were committed to the assumption that 'last week's' drinking could be treated as a representative sample of each informant's drinking. However, it seemed worthwhile to incorporate checks on this assumption in the questionnaire by, firstly, asking all those who did drink 'last week' whether or not it was typical of the amount they usually drink in a week (Q.11). Secondly, we recognized that there might be some informants who did not drink 'last week' but usually do and they are catered for at Q.12.

In theory, therefore, we can use two correction factors in order to convert information on 'last week's' drinking into a typical week's drinking. Firstly, we can amend 'last week's' drinking by the amounts given as more or less than usual for those who did drink 'last week'. Secondly, we can include those who did not drink 'last week' but usually do drink in a week in our total of all those who typically drink in a week and exclude those who did drink 'last week' but usually do not.

At the outset of the analysis we intended to apply these two correction factors but detailed examination of these factors resulted in a reversal of this decision. We shall discuss the reasons for reversing our decision by firstly looking at the amendments to the actual amounts drunk 'last week' and secondly at the amendment to the total number who drink in a week.

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[1] *1 'American Drinking Practices' - Cahalan, Cisin & Crossley, pp 14-15.*
2 'Correlates of trouble with drinking' - Edwards, Chandler, Hensman & Peto p.4

1 Amendment of the amounts drunk 'last week'.

The proportions of male and female regular drinkers who stated that 'last week's' drinking was or was not typical of the amount they usually drink in a week and, if not typical, whether more or less than usual was drunk 'last week', are given in Table A.1.

Table A.1.

Regular Drinkers: Whether or not 'last week' was typical of the amount usually drunk in a week by sex.

Whether or not 'last week' was typical	Male regular drinkers		Female regular drinkers	
	%		%	
Typical	66		60	
Not typical	33		39	
Drank less than usual 'last week'	9		6	
Drank more than usual 'last week'	19	24	14	33
All that was drunk 'last week' was more than usual (ie usually drinks less than once a week)	5		19	
Other	-		1	
All regular drinkers	100		100	
Base	*1192.1*		*861.4*	

It is clear that the majority of male and female regular drinkers consider that the amount they drank 'last week' was typical of the amount they usually drink in a week. However, a third of men and two-fifths of women who are regular drinkers consider it was not typical.

Those who stated that 'last week's' drinking was not typical have been subdivided into three groups: those who said they drank less than usual last week, those who said they drank more than usual last week and, an extreme version of the latter, those from whose answers it can be concluded that *all* that was drunk last week was more than usual (ie they do not usually drink in a week).

It can be seen that the proportion who state that they drank more than usual last week greatly exceeds the proportion who state that they drank less than usual last week. In fact, the excess seems to be greater for women than for men (33% compared with 6% for women but 24% compared with 9% for men). However, the main difference between men and women is the very high proportion of women who consider that *all* that was drunk last week was more than usual - 19% of women compared with 5% of men. This can be explained in terms of the fact that women tend to drink considerably smaller amounts of alcohol than men, so that if they claim to have drunk more than usual 'last week' this is more likely to result in all of it being more than usual, ie they do not usually drink in a week.

It may seem surprising that we have a much larger proportion stating that they drank more than usual rather than less than usual 'last week' as, by chance, we would expect to have approximately equal proportions. However, it must be remembered that this question followed one in which informants gave details of everything that they drank 'last week' and so, it is likely that they may have used this question as a 'let-out'. In other words, to reduce their feelings of guilt about their 'last week's' drinking they may have stated that they drank more than usual 'last week'. It can be seen from Table A.2 that the proportion drinking more than usual does tend to rise, from 21% to 34% between the lowest and highest drinking categories amongst men and from 34% to 48% amongst women. The reason why women, whatever the amount they drink, are much more likely than men to think that they drank more than usual 'last week' is difficult to explain - it is possibly because women in Scotland feel under more pressure than men to state that they do the things which are socially acceptable with respect to drinking, ie drink only a little or not at all.

It was clear, therefore, that if we applied the amendments given by informants we would be reducing the total amount drunk in a week. Moreover, the reduction would not be consistent over all informants since we knew that women and those who currently drink a lot were the most likely to have stated that they drank more than usual 'last week'. It can be argued that informants were not genuinely correcting their 'last week's' drinking to give a typical week's drinking but were using this question to reduce the amount they drink. Equally, it is plausible that if informants are asked for typical amounts they will nearly always give a low estimate of how much they drink. In either case, it seemed clear that 'last week's' drinking was a better estimate of usual drinking than that which resulted from using informant's amendments. Therefore, we decided to use 'last week's' drinking in its original form as our measure of drinking behaviour.

2 Amendment of the total number of regular drinkers

As we mentioned earlier we have a second correction factor for those who usually do drink in a week but just happened not to drink 'last week'. The antithesis of this category is those who did drink 'last week' but usually do not drink in a week, ie those who stated that all that was drunk last week was more than usual. We would expect that, since 'last week' did not cover any special holiday periods, the number who did not drink 'last week' but usually do would cancel out those who did drink last week but usually do not.

Table A.3 shows, however, that the proportion who did drink 'last week' but usually do not is over twice as large as the proportion who did not drink 'last week' but usually do (6.4% compared with 2.9%). In fact, the proportions amongst men do seem to cancel out but amongst women we find a much greater proportion who drank last week but usually do not, than vice-versa (8.7% compared with 2.7%). The probable reason for the latter is that there are a greater proportion of women than men who drink infrequently and so are more likely to consider that, although they drank last week, this was not typical of a usual week.

Table A.2 Whether or not last week was typical by sex and amount drunk

Whether or not last week was typical	Men							Women				
	Number of alcoholic units per week						All regular drinkers	Number of alcoholic units				All regular drinkers
	1-2	3-5	6-10	11-20	21-50	51+		1-2	3-5	6-10	11+	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Typical	67	69	70	66	63	61	66	60	71	48	52	60
Not typical:	33	29	29	34	37	38	9	40	29	49	48	39
Drank less than usual last week	12	12	10	9	7	4	9	6	9	3	-	6
Drank more than usual last week	2	7	12	24	30	34	19	1	9	34	45	14
	21	17	19	25	30	34	24	34	20	46	48	33
All that was drunk last week was more than usual ie. usually doesn't drink in a week	18	10	7	1	–	–	5	32	11	11	3	19
Other	-	2	1	-	-	1	-	1	-	3	-	1
All regular drinkers	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	*132.3*	*159.0*	*241.0*	*253.3*	*300.3*	*106.3*	*1192.1*	*357.7*	*261.6*	*161.3*	*80.8*	*861.4*

Table A.3

Comparison of those who did drink "last week" but usually do not with those who did not drink "last week" but usually do by sex.

	Men	Women	Total
	%	%	%
(i) Did drink "last week" but usually do not	3.7	8.7	6.4
(ii) Did not drink "last week" but usually do	3.0	2.7	2.9
Proportion who would be excluded from regular drinkers [ie (i) - (ii)]	0.7	6.0	3.5

If we did apply this correction factor we would not only reduce the proportion of regular drinkers by 3.5% overall but also reduce it disproportionately amongst men and women (0.7% for men and 6.0% for women). In fact, we were not prepared to accept this amendment, particularly when the dividing line between light regular drinkers and occasional drinkers is, in any case, rather hazy. We decided, therefore, to use the total who drank 'last week' as our best estimate of the total number who usually drink in a week, ie regular drinkers.

To sum up, we decided to use our measure of 'last week's' drinking in its original form for two main reasons. Firstly, it seemed very likely that our Q.11 invited informants to state that they drank more than usual 'last week', so that if we corrected according to the results of this question we would in fact be incorporating bias into our measures of drinking behaviour. Secondly, the misclassification of very light regular drinkers and occasional drinkers is not very serious because there is, in any case, a rather blurred line between these two groups and, again, if we had incorporated the results of Q.12 it seemed likely that we would have been substituting bias for random error. Finally, it should be pointed out that the random error resulting from taking 'last week's' drinking is not likely to be excessive and is, indeed, preferable to bias. Although the presence of random error means that an individual's weekly consumption rate may be slightly incorrect, overall these individual errors should balance each other out ie the person who drank more than usual counterbalances the person who drank less than usual so that the general pattern of relationships between drinking behaviour and other variables is not distorted. Moreover, population estimates, such as the national distribution of alcoholic consumption, should properly be based upon actual consumption over a specified period and not upon individuals estimates of 'normal' behaviour.

B The schedule

S1008

SURVEY OF DRINKING HABITS AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS ALCOHOL IN SCOTLAND

Serial Number

Area				Address		Person

Interviewer's Name ....

Authorisation Number ....

Date of Interview ....

---

1. First of all, I'd like to know what your opinions are about drinking in Scotland today compared with 10 years ago. Do you think there are more people, less people or about the same number of people drinking in Scotland these days compared with 10 years ago?

More people	1	ask (a)
Less people	2	
Same number of people	3	go to 2
Other (specify)	4	

(a) Do you think that there are any reasons for more/less people drinking these days in Scotland?

IF YES - WHAT REASONS?

No .... 1 go to 2

2. Do you think that the same kinds of alcoholic drinks are drunk these days as 10 years ago or do you think certain alcoholic drinks are more popular now.

Same kinds of drinks drunk these days	1	go to 3
Certain drinks more popular now	2	ask (a)&(b)
DK	3	go to 3

(a)	(b)
What drinks are more popular these days [If more than 3 take main 3]	What are the reasons for being more popular now?
1.	
2.	
3.	

3. Now I'd like you to think about all your friends and acquaintances you know well. Thinking first of all about the men you know well, how many of them drink at all. Would you say it was:

RUNNING PROMPT

all of them	1	
most	2	
about ½	3	
few	4	
or none of them?	5	
DK	6	go to 5
DNA don't know any men well	7	

4. About how many of these men who drink at all would you say were heavy drinkers. Would you say it was:

RUNNING PROMPT

all of them	1
most	2
about ½	3
few	4
or none of them?	5
DK	6

5. Now I'd like to change the subject to the women you know well. First of all could you tell me how many of them drink at all. Would you say it was:

RUNNING PROMPT

all of them	1	
most	2	
about ½	3	
few	4	
or none of them?	5	
DK	6	go to 7
DNA don't know any women well	7	

6. About how many of these women who drink at all would you say were heavy drinkers. Would you say it was:

RUNNING PROMPT

all of them	1
most	2
about ½	3
few	4
or none of them?	5
DK	6

7. As you know people drink different amounts – some people could be called heavy drinkers and others could be called light drinkers while others are between these two groups.

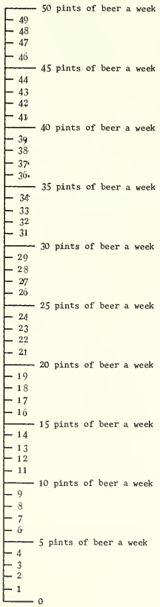
[READ SLOWLY]
I'd like you to look at the scale on this page and decide whereabouts a heavy drinker, who drinks beer only, comes on the scale. For example, if you think a man who is a heavy drinker drinks 5 pints of beer or more in a week put a cross here, but if you think that's not heavy drinking but 10 pints of beer or more in a week is heavy drinking put a cross here. On the other hand you might think that it's not until you get to 40 pints of beer or more in a week that it's heavy drinking and so you'd put your cross here. You can choose any point on the scale, it's just the point at which you think heavy drinking starts.
[CHECK THAT INFORMANT UNDERSTANDS]

(a) Now I'd like you to do exactly the same thing for a heavy drinker who drinks whisky only. The amount of whisky is given in terms of bottles and you have to decide whereabouts a man who is a heavy drinker comes on this scale. So, if you think a man who drinks ½ bottle of whisky or more in a week is a heavy drinker put a cross here but if you think that's not heavy drinking but 3 bottles or more of whisky in a week is heavy drinking put a cross here and so on.

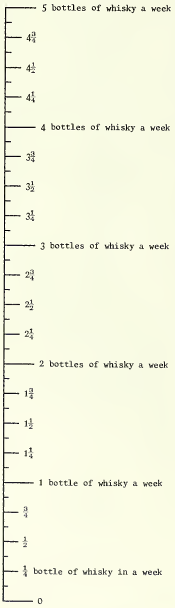
(b) Now I'd like to change the subject to light drinkers. I'd like you to think about a light drinker who drinks beer only and decide whereabouts he would come on the first scale. For example, if you think someone who drinks anything up to 20 pints of beer in a week is a light drinker put a cross here but if you think that's not light drinking but anything up to 10 pints of beer in a week is light drinking put a cross here. On the other hand you might think anything up to 30 pints of beer in a week is light drinking so you'd put your cross here. As before, you can choose any point on the scale, it's just the amount you think of as light drinking

(c) Finally, I'd like you to think about a light drinker who drinks whisky only and decide whereabouts a man who is a light drinker would come on the second scale. Please would you put a cross by the amount of whisky which you think of as light drinking.

A MAN WHO DRINKS BEER ONLY



A MAN WHO DRINKS WHISKY ONLY


5 bottles of whisky a week
4¾
4½
4¼
4 bottles of whisky a week
3¾
3½
3¼
3 bottles of whisky a week
2¾
2½
2¼
2 bottles of whisky a week
1¾
1½
1¼
1 bottle of whisky a week
¾
½
¼ bottle of whisky in a week
0

8. I have here a list of statements which people have said about the subject of drinking. As I read each statement out I would like you to tell me whether you agree strongly, agree slightly, neither agree nor disagree, disagree slightly or disagree strongly. The answers I would like you to choose from are printed here on this card.
HAND OVER CARD A

	Agree strongly	Agree slightly	Neither	Disagree slightly	Disagree strongly
1. A drink makes many people more sociable	5	4	3	2	1
2. Drinking costs more money than the pleasure is worth	5	4	3	2	1
3. Drink is one of the main causes of immoral behaviour	5	4	3	2	1
4. Having a drink is one of the pleasures in life	5	4	3	2	1
5. Children and young people should be discouraged from taking up drinking	5	4	3	2	1
6. It's degrading for women to be seen drinking in public houses	5	4	3	2	1
7. Life would be very dull if one couldn't drink	5	4	3	2	1
8. People who spend a lot of their time in public houses soon end up in trouble	5	4	3	2	1
9. There is nothing wrong in having a few drinks	5	4	3	2	1
10. Drink usually brings out the worst in people	5	4	3	2	1
11. Having a drink with someone is a way of being friendly	5	4	3	2	1
12. Drink is a cause of many unhappy marriages	5	4	3	2	1
13. People who drink and drive should be punished more severly	5	4	3	2	1

PART 2 - DRINKING HABITS AND MOTIVATIONS

I'm now going to ask you a few questions about what you drink - that is, if you do drink.

9. Do you ever drink alcohol at all nowadays?

Yes	1	go to (b)
No	A	ask (a)

(a) Could I just check, does that mean you never have a drink nowadays or do you have a drink very occasionally perhaps for medicinal purposes or on special occasions like New Year?

Very occasionally	2	ask (b)
Never	3	go to 17

(b) I'm going to read out a few descriptions about the amounts people drink and I'd like you to say which one fits you best. Would you say you:

RUNNING PROMPT

hardly drink at all	1
drink a little	2
drink about average	3
drink quite a lot	4
or drink heavily	5
DK	6

10. I'd like you to think back over last week, did you have anything alcoholic to drink last (Day of interview) or on any of the days since then? → Yes ...... 1 ask (a)

No alcohol consumed last week ...... 2 go to 12

(a) Starting with yesterday did you have a drink at all on that day [Underline day you start with and draw a line after each separate time on each day]

	(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)			
Day of week	About what time of day did you drink (again) on (DAY) and for how long were you drinking? [Record (Time am/pm) until (Time am/pm) to nearest ½ hour for each occasion]	[FOR EACH DRINKING OCCASION] What did you have to drink? Probe for beverages and total amount	[FOR EACH DRINKING OCCASION] Where were you when you had your drink(s) (ie put, hotel, club, own home etc.)	[FOR EACH DRINKING OCCASION] Were you on your own or were you in company when you had your drink(s). IF IN COMPANY ASK (a) & (b) (a) Who were you with? (ie spouse, brother/sister(in law), mother/father (in law), other relative, girl/boy friend/fiance(e), other friend)	(b) Could I just check how many men & how many women were you with excluding yourself. (If over 5 get approx.)	Day of week	Office Use
SUNDAY	No drinking...1					SUN	
MONDAY	No drinking...1					MON	
TUESDAY	No drinking...1					TUES	
WEDNESDAY	No drinking...1					WED	
THURSDAY	No drinking...1					THURS	
FRIDAY	No drinking...1					FRI	
SATURDAY	No drinking...1					SAT	

11. Would you say that last week was fairly typical of the amount you usually have to drink in a week or not?

Yes .... 1 } go to 13
No .... 2 ask (a)
Other (specify) .... 3 } go to 13

(a) So would you say you had more or less than usual to drink last week?

More than usual last week 4
Less than usual last week 5

(b) On what days did you drink more/less than usual last week [code 1 opposite]

(c) [FOR EACH DAY CODED 1] How much more/less than usual did you drink on .... (DAY)

DAY	More /Less	Amount more/less [specify beverage]
SUN	1	
MON	1	
TUES	1	
WED	1	
THURS	1	
FRI	1	
SAT	1	

→ GO TO 13

FOR THOSE WHO DIDN'T DRINK LAST WEEK ONLY - CODE 2, Q.10

12. So last week you didn't have anything to drink, would you say that was typical or do you usually have a drink at least once a week.

Usually has a drink at least once a week .... 1 } ask (a)&(b)
Last week typical (drinks less than once a week) .... 2 } go to (c)

12. Cont.

(a) So on how many days do you usually drink in a week?

Number of days in a week ....

(b) Overall, about how much would you have to drink in a week? PROBE FOR AMOUNT AND BEVERAGE.

→ GO TO 13

(c) I'd like you to look at this card and tell me how often you usually have an alcoholic drink [HAND OVER CARD C]
Would you say it was:

RUNNING PROMPT
about once a fortnight 1
once a month 2
once every 3 or 4 months 3
once a year 4
or less than once a year 5

Other (specify) 6

(d) When you have a drink, what do you usually drink and how much do you have on any one occasion. PROBE FOR AMOUNT AND BEVERAGE.

13. If alcoholic drinks became a lot cheaper do you think you would drink more?

Yes 1
No 2
Other (specify) 3

14. People who have a drink from time to time do so for lots of different reasons. I have here a pack of cards and each card has written on it a reason some people have given for having a drink. I would like you to read each card and then decide whether you ever have a drink for that reason. If you do, put the card on one side, but if you never have a drink for that reason hand the card back to me. Please would you do this with each card. SHUFFLE CARDS AND HAND OVER. CHECK FIRST FEW CARDS TO MAKE SURE YOU ARE BEING GIVEN BACK NEVER CARDS AND CODE IN COL. 1.

WHEN ALL CARDS SORTED. Now could you pick up the pile of cards and look at the first one. Could you tell me whether this is an important reason for you drinking or not an important reason. [WHEN DECIDED]. Please could you hand me back the card and look at the next one. [Code as appropriate in col. 2 or 3].

	Never	Not an important reason	An important reason
1. I drink to help myself relax	1	2	3
2. I drink because I find it refreshing	1	2	3
3. I drink because it makes me feel good	1	2	3
4. I drink because it goes well with meals	1	2	3
5. I drink when I want to celebrate something	1	2	3
6. I drink because the people I know drink	1	2	3
7. I drink because I enjoy the taste of it	1	2	3
8. I drink to cheer myself up	1	2	3
9. I drink because it's the polite thing to do in certain situations	1	2	3
10. I drink to forget my worries	1	2	3
11. I drink because it gives me confidence	1	2	3
12. I drink to be sociable	1	2	3
13. I drink when I want to pull myself together	1	2	3
14. I drink because it improves my appetite for food	1	2	3
15. I drink because it helps me feel at ease with people	1	2	3

People have very different patterns of drinking, some always have a drink alone, some always have a drink in company and others have a drink both alone and in company.

15. When you're at home or when you go out do you always have a drink with someone else or do you sometimes have a drink on your own?

Always drinks with someone else ..... 1 } go to 16
Sometimes drinks on own ..... 2 } ask (a)-(c)
(Code if spontaneous) Always drinks on own ..... 3 } ask (a)&(c)

(a) When you have a drink on your own do you usually drink in a pub, at home or where?

Pub 1
At home 2
Hotel 3
Other (specify) 4

ALWAYS DRINKS ON OWN GO TO (c)

(b) About how often do you have a drink on your own. [PROBE FOR NO. OF TIMES IN WEEK, MONTH ETC.]

(c) Are there any reasons why you sometimes (always) have a drink on your own? IF YES - WHAT REASONS

No 1

16. People have different feelings about the amount they would like to drink. Some people are quite satisfied with the amount they drink, some would like to drink more and others would like to drink less. How do you feel about the amount you drink now. Would you say you were:

RUNNING PROMPT

Quite satisfied .... 1 } go to 18
Would like to drink more .... 2 } ask (a)
or Would like to drink less .... 3 } ask (a)
DK .... 4 } go to 18

(a) What would you say are the reasons why you would like to drink more/less?

→ GO TO 18

PART 3 DRINKING HISTORY

FOR THOSE WHO NEVER DRINK NOWADAYS – Code 3 at Q.9(a)

17. Have you ever had an alcoholic drink of any kind?

Yes .... 1 } GO TO 18
No .... 2 ask (a)

(a) What do you think are the reasons why you have never had an alcoholic drink.

→ GO TO 22

---

18. We want to know a bit about how people come to start drinking alcohol so I'd like to ask you a few questions about this. I'd like you to think back to the very first time you can remember having anything alcoholic to drink. Can you tell me roughly how old you were then?

Age ....

(a) Were you on your own or in company at that time?

On own .... 0 } go to (b)
In company .... A ask (i)

(i) Who were you with? [Code all that apply]

Spouse 1
Brother 2
Sister 3
Mother 4
Father 5
Other relative(s) 6
(ie opposite sex) Girlfriend/boyfriend/fiance(e) 7
Other friend(s) male 8
Other friend(s) female 9

18. Cont.

(b) Can you remember what it was you had to drink?
IF YES – PROBE FOR BEVERAGE

No .... 1 go to 19

(c) Did you enjoy the taste of it or not?

Yes 1
No 2
DK 3

---

19. How old would you say you were when you started drinking as opposed to just trying out drinks to see what they were like?

Age .... go to (b)
DNA never really started drinking .... 1 ask (a)

(a) What would you say were the reasons why you never really started drinking?

→ GO TO 22

(b) What would you say were the reasons why you started drinking at that time?

(c) Who did you usually drink with at that time or did you drink on your own? [Code all that apply]

DNA, on own 0

Spouse 1
Brother 2
Sister 3
Mother 4
Father 5
Other relative(s) 6
(ie opposite sex) Girlfriend/boyfriend/fiance(e) 7
Other friend(s) male 8
Other friend(s) female 9

THOSE WHO NEVER DRINK NOWADAYS BUT WHO DID START DRINKING
(ie Age given Q.19) ASK 20
OTHERS WHO DID START DRINKING GO TO 21.

20. You told me earlier that you never drink nowadays, about how old were you when you stopped drinking?

Age.....................

(a) What would you say were the reasons why you stopped drinking?

→ GO TO 22

---

21. I'd like you to think about the amount you used to drink 10 years ago – Could I just check had you started drinking 10 years ago?

Yes.................. 1 ask (a)
No.................. 2 go to 22

(a) Would you say that on the whole you drink more, less or about the same amount now as you drank 10 years ago?

More now.......................... 1 } ask (b)
Less now.......................... 2 }
About the same amount............ 3 go to 22

(b) What would you say are the reasons for your drinking more/less now than you did 10 years ago?

TO ALL

22. Did either of your parents drink at all when you were young?
[Code below for each]

	Father	Mother	
Drank	1	1	ask (a)
Did not drink	2	2	go to (c)
DNA, no parent	3	3	go to 23
DK	4	4	

(a) At that time, how often did your father/mother have a drink. Would you say it was:

RUNNING PROMPT

	Father	Mother	
Less than once a week	4	4	ask (i) only
About once a week	3	3	ask (b) only
2-3 times a week	2	2	
4 or more times a week	1	1	

(i) I'd like you to look at this card [HAND OVER CARD C] and tell me which one applies to how often your father/mother had a drink when you were young.

	Father	Mother
About once a fortnight	5	5
About once a month	6	6
About once every 3 or 4 months	7	7
About once a year	8	8
Less than once a year	9	9

(b) How did you feel about your father's/mother's drinking. Were you bothered by it in any way or didn't you mind?

	Father	Mother
Bothered	1	1
Didn't mind	2	2
Other (specify)	3	3

22 Cont.

(c) What would you say were the reasons why your father/mother didn't drink.

FATHER

MOTHER

[IF BOTH DIDN'T DRINK] Could I just check is that why your mother didn't drink as well or did she have different reasons for not drinking?
IF DIFFERENT - WHAT REASONS

Same as father.................. 1

PART 4 DRINKING AND HEALTH

People have differing views about whether alcoholic drinks are good or bad for health so I'd like to ask you a few questions about this.

23. First of all, do you think that taking alcoholic drinks can ever have good effects on a person's health?

Yes	1	ask (a)
No	2	go to 24
D.K.	3	

23 cont.

(a) What good effects can alcoholic drinks have on a person's health?
PROBE FULLY ALL GOOD EFFECTS

---

24. Do you think that drinking can ever damage people's health?

Yes.............................. 1 ask (a)
No never damages health.......... 2 } go to 25
D.K.............................. 3 }

(a) In what ways can drinking damage people's health?

Apart from drinking, another thing which some people say damages health is smoking so I'd like to ask you what you feel about this.

25. First of all, could you tell me whether you think smoking can ever damage people's health?

Yes.............................. 1
No, never damages health......... 2 } go to 27
D.K.............................. 3 }

FOR THOSE WHO THINK DRINKING CAN DAMAGE HEALTH AND SMOKING CAN DAMAGE HEALTH - OTHERS GO TO 27

26. Overall which would you say is more harmful to people's health - smoking or drinking?

Smoking more harmful.................... 1
Drinking more harmful................... 2
Both the same........................... 3
Other (specify)......................... 4

---

27. Could I just check - do you smoke at all?

Yes............ 1 ask a
No............. 2 go to 28

(a) Which do you mainly smoke - cigarettes, cigars or a pipe?

Cigarettes.................... 1 } ask (b)
Cigars .... 2 }
Pipe.......................... 3 go to (c)

(b) About how many cigarettes (cigars) do you smoke a day?

Up to 2....................... 1
3-4........................... 2
5-9........................... 3
10-14......................... 4
15-19......................... 5
20-24......................... 6
25-29......................... 7
30-39......................... 8
40 and over................... 9
Other (specify)............... 10

(c) About how much tobacco do you smoke in a week?

Less than $\frac{1}{2}$ oz....................... 1
$\frac{1}{2}$-1 oz............................. 2
Over 1-2 oz........................... 3
Over 2-3 oz........................... 4
Over 3-4 oz........................... 5
Over 4-5 oz........................... 6
Over 5-6 oz........................... 7
Over 6-8 oz........................... 8
Over 8 oz............................. 9
Other (specify)....................... 10

PART 5 DRUNKENNESS AND ALCOHOLISM

Until now most of the questions have been about drinking in general but now I'd like to ask you a few questions about your opinions on drunkenness and alcoholism.

28. Do you ever see drunken people streets in this area?

Yes................. 1 ask (a)
No, never........... 2 } go to (b)

(a) About how often would you say there are drunken people in the streets in this area. Would you say it was:

RUNNING PROMPT
most days.............................. 1
once or twice a week................... 2
once or twice a month.................. 3
once or twice a year................... 4
or less than once a year?.............. 5
D.K.................................... 6

(b) Thinking more generally about drunkenness in Scotland are there any kinds of drunken behaviour you particularly dislike or does it generally not bother you?

Dislikes certain kinds of drunken behaviour....... 1 ask (i)
Generally not bothered............................ 2 go to (c)

(i) What kinds of drunken behaviour do you particularly dislike?
PROBE FULLY

(c) In general are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way those who cause a nuisance to others through being drunk are dealt with?

Satisfied.............................. 1 go to 29
Dissatisfied........................... 2 } ask (d)
In some ways satisfied
& in some ways dissatisfied............ 3 }
D.K.................................... 4 go to 29

28. cont.

(d) In what ways are you dissatisfied?

29. What would you say was meant if a person was called an alcoholic?

Absolutely no idea what an alcoholic is .... 1 go to 33

(a) Do you think there are any differences between an alcoholic and a heavy drinker?

Yes .... 1 ask (b)
No .... 2 } go to 30
D.K. .... 3 }

(b) What are the differences between an alcoholic and a heavy drinker?
PROBE FULLY

30. I have here a list of things which people sometimes say about drunkenness and alcoholism. As I read each statement out I would like you to tell me whether you agree strongly, agree slightly, neither agree nor disagree, disagree slightly, or disagree strongly. The answers I would like you to choose from are printed on this card. HAND OVER CARD A.

	Agree strongly	Agree slightly	Neither	Disagree slightly	Disagree strongly
1. It does some people good to get drunk once in a while	5	4	3	2	1
2. It's embarrassing to see someone you know get drunk	5	4	3	2	1
3. I would feel ashamed if anyone in my family got drunk	5	4	3	2	1
4. A drunken person is a disgusting sight	5	4	3	2	1
5. Getting drunk is a good way of forgetting your troubles for a while	5	4	3	2	1
6. A person who gets drunk in public has no self respect	5	4	3	2	1
7. A drunken woman is a far worse sight than a drunken man	5	4	3	2	1
8. People who are drunk can be very amusing	5	4	3	2	1
9. The earlier in life a person starts drinking alcohol the more likely that person is to become an alcoholic	5	4	3	2	1
10. Doctors shouldn't waste time on alcoholics when they could be curing people with real illnesses	5	4	3	2	1
11. People who become alcoholics have only themselves to blame	5	4	3	2	1
12. Even if an alcoholic claims to be cured, that person can never be trusted with a responsible job	5	4	3	2	1
13. Giving treatment to alcoholics is something well worth spending public money on	5	4	3	2	1
14. Alcoholics can never reach the point where they stop drinking for good	5	4	3	2	1
15. People are often more honest when they're drunk than when they're sober	5	4	3	2	1

31. If a person thought that someone in his or her close family was becoming an alcoholic do you think that person should do anything about it or not?

Yes .... 1 ask (a)
No .... 2 } go to (b)
Other (specify) .... 3 }

(a) What should they do about it?

(b) Do you know where (anywhere else) an alcoholic could go if he or she wanted help?
PROBE FULLY FOR NAMES OF ORGANISATIONS.

32. Do you happen to know or have you known personally anyone who you would say was an alcoholic?

Yes	1	ask (a)
No, knows none	2	go to 33

(a) Could I check is it just one alcoholic that you know or have you known more than one?

Knows 1 only	3
Knows 2	4
Knows 3	5
Knows more than 3	6

FOR EACH ALCOHOLIC KNOWN ASK (b)-(e)
[IF KNOWS MORE THAN 3 TAKE 3 INFORMANT KNOWS BEST]

(b)		(c)
Who is (was) the person you know - I mean is (was) it a friend, relative or what? [IF RELATIVE - probe for blood relative or relative by marriage]		What makes you say that .... is (was) an alcoholic?
1. Sex	M..F	
2. Sex	M..F	
3. Sex	M..F	

32. cont.

(d)	(e)	
Why do you think .... became an alcoholic?	Do you think .... being an alcoholic has had any effect on your drinking [IF YES - what effect]	
1.	No effect	1
2.	No effect	1
3.	No effect	1

33. Preamble for household box.

PERS NO	RELATIONSHIP TO INFORMANT (name for those 17-21 where INFORMANT is HOH)	SEX		AGE last birth -day [IF 17 WHAT MONTH]	MATIRAL STATUS			WORKING STATUS				[IF 16 OR OVER] Does - ever have anything alcoholic to drink	
		M	F		M	S	W/S/D	F/T	P/T	UN-EMPL	NOT WORK-ING	YES	NO
1	INFORMANT	1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
2		1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
3		1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
4		1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
5		1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
6		1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
7		1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
8		1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
9		1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10		1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

H.O.H. IS PERSON NO ....

INTERVIEWER
34. IS THE INFORMANT HOH

Yes 1
No .... 2 } go to 35

IF YES

(a) ARE THERE ANY YOUNG PERSONS AGED 17-21 LAST BIRTHDAY IN THIS HOUSEHOLD (A WIFE AGED 17-21 IS A YOUNG PERSON)

Yes 3
No .... 4 } go to 35

NB || EXCLUDE 17 YEAR OLDS WHOSE BIRTHDAY FELL BETWEEN MARCH AND DAY OF INTERVIEW

IF YOUNG PERSONS IN HOUSEHOLD
(b) HOW MANY YOUNG PERSONS

Number ....

(c) CHECK NAMES OF YOUNG PERSONS AGAINST THOSE ON ADDRESS LIST. GIVE NUMBER OF NAMES ON ADDRESS LIST AND NUMBER NOT ON ADDRESS LIST.

Number on address list ....
Number not on address list ....

UNDERLINE IN H/H BOX ALL THOSE YOUNG PERSONS NOT ON ADDRESS LIST. INTERVIEW THESE YOUNG PERSONS.

35. Could you tell me what your occupation is?
PROBE FOR FULL DETAILS OF OCCUPATION AND INDUSTRY

OCCUPATION

INDUSTRY

(i) Are you self-employed or an employee?

Self-employed 1
Employee 2

ASK ALL WHOSE WORKING STATUS [H/H BOX] IS CODE 1, 2, 3 AND CODE 4 IF RETIRED - OTHERS GO TO 37

Some employees have a drink with clients or customers as part of their job and others are sometimes given a free supply of alcoholic drinks - so I'd like to ask you:

36. In your present (last) job do you ever drink with clients, customers or other people as part of the job?

Yes .... 1 ask (a)
No .... 2 } go to (e)
Other (specify) .... 3 }

(a) On what sorts of occasion do you drink as part of the job?

(b) Who do you usually drink with on these occasions?
(SPECIFY CUSTOMERS, COLLEAGUES ETC.)

(c) On about how many days during an average week or an average month do you have a drink as part of the job?
(SPECIFY PER WEEK, PER MONTH ETC)

36. (Cont.)

(d) When you drink as part of the job do you always have to pay out of your own money or do you sometimes get drinks free or at a discount or on an expense account?

Always pays own money 1
Other (PROBE FULLY) 2

(e) (Apart from having a drink as part of the job) do you ever get alcoholic drinks free or at a special discount as a perk of your job?

Yes, gets drink free or at a discount 1
No, never gets drinks free or at a discount 2

---

37. Please could you look at this card (HAND OVER INCOME CARD) and tell me into which one of the 8 groups your own income falls. This includes the income you get from all sources, after income tax, National Insurance, and other compulsory deductions have been taken off.

Per week	Per year	
Up to £5	or Up to £260	1
Over £5 to £10	or Over £260 to £520	2
Over £10 to £15	or Over £520 to £780	3
Over £15 to £20	or Over £780 to £1040	4
Over £20 to £25	or Over £1040 to £1300	5
Over £25 to £30	or Over £1300 to £1560	6
Over £30 to £40	or Over £1560 to £2080	7
Over £40	or Over £2080	8
Refusal		9

IF INFORMANT IS HOH OR A YOUNG PERSON (SUPPLEMENTARY SAMPLE) GO TO 40

38. Could you tell me what the occupation of ______________ (HOH) is?
PROBE FOR FULL DETAILS OF OCCUPATION AND INDUSTRY

OCCUPATION

INDUSTRY

(i) Is ____________ self-employed or an employee?

Self-employed 1
Employee 2

---

39. Please could you look at this card again [HAND OVER INCOME CARD] and tell me into which of the 8 groups the income of ________ (HOH) falls. This includes the income ______ (HOH) has from all sources after income tax, National Insurance, and other compulsory deductions have been taken off.

Per week	Per year	
Up to £5	or Up to £260	1
Over £5 to £10	or Over £260 to £520	2
Over £10 to £15	or Over £520 to £780	3
Over £15 to £20	or Over £780 to £1040	4
Over £20 to £25	or Over £1040 to £1300	5
Over £25 to £30	or Over £1300 to £1560	6
Over £30 to £40	or Over £1560 to £2080	7
Over £40	or Over £2080	8
DK		9
Refusal/Not asked		10

If code 9 or 10 give reason

---

40. Sometimes people's religious views are connected with their opinions on drinking. Do you belong to any religious denomination or religious group?

Yes .... 1 ask (a)
No .... 2 go to 41

40. (cont)

(a) What religious denomination or religious group is that?

(b) About how often do you usually go to church or your place of worship. Would you say it was:

RUNNING PROMPT

More than once a week 1
about once a week 2
at least once a month 3
less than once a month 4
or never? 5

---

41. Could I just check - were you born in Scotland?

Yes .... 1 } go to 42
No .... 2 ask (a)

(a) What country were you born in?

(b) When did you move to Scotland?

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42. That's all I want to ask you. Is there anything else that you would like to add on the subject of drinking. [SEE NOTE BELOW].

N.B. ARE THERE ANY YOUNG PERSONS TO BE INTERVIEWED

C The explanatory leaflet

Office of Population Censuses and Surveys

SOCIAL SURVEY DIVISION

S. 1008

SURVEY ON ALCOHOLIC DRINKING IN SCOTLAND

The Social Survey Division, which is the Government survey organisation, is carrying out this survey for the Scottish Home and Health Department.

The Scottish Home and Health Department is concerned with many aspects of planning for people's health and welfare and one of its concerns is with the problem of alcoholism and excessive drinking. The main aim of the survey is to find out the public's views on this subject - whether people feel that alcoholism is a problem in Scotland today and, if so, what would they like to see done about it. At the same time, the Scottish Home and Health Department is interested in the public's views on drinking in general.

The names and addresses of people who cooperate in surveys are not disclosed to anyone outside the Social Survey Division. The information given in the survey will be treated as **STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL** and the results will be presented in such a way that no individual can ever be identified.

There is no compulsion to take part in the survey but its value does depend upon the cooperation of the people we approach.

Thank you very much for your help.

Atlantic House
Holborn Viaduct
LONDON EC1N 2PD
Tel. 01-583 8931

W89 OPCS 8/72

D Technical sampling report

by Denis Lewis

Sampling Branch, OPCS

D.1 Introduction

A random set sample of approximately 3,000 electors in Scotland was required. A three stage, stratified design was used, in which 100 local authorities were selected at the first stage from within which 2 wards or groups of parishes/electoral divisions were selected. Selection at the first two stages was with probability proportional to electorate size, and at the final stage electors were drawn from the Electoral Register with equal probability within each second stage unit. This makes the overall probability of selection of electors uniform.

As the drinking habits of those who consume reasonably large quantities of alcohol were to be analysed in detail, it was decided to include in the sample twice as many men as women (since it is known that men are both more likely to drink and to consume alcohol in significant quantities than women). The set sample was therefore expected to consist of about 2,000 men and 1,000 women: its actual composition as drawn was 2034:969.

A fairly high proportion of persons in the 17-21 year age group are known to be missing from the Electoral Register. Therefore, a supplementary sample of these young people was taken from households where the elector selected in the main sample was found to be the Head of Household.

D.2 Sample size

The sample size was influenced by two main requirements:-

(i) a detailed demographic analysis of the adult population
(ii) a detailed analysis of drinking habits.

It was necessary to ensure that the sample contained a sufficiently large number of 'medium to heavy' drinkers so that their drinking habits could be analysed in detail. As drinking is more common amongst men and the vast majority of heavy drinkers are male, it was decided to include twice as many men as women in the set sample.

Available statistics suggest that the incidence of drunkenness is higher in the Highlands than in the remainder of Scotland outside the cities and some large burghs. Consideration was given to the possibility of overweighting this region. However, as only about 4% of the population lives in the Highlands, and it is dispersed over a large area, it was felt that the increased costs involved would not be justified.

For analysis purposes, it was estimated that a sample of about 2,500 persons would be required. An allowance of approximately 17% was made to cover non-response (ie refusals and non-contacts), so that the total number of individuals listed for interview (ie the set sample) needed to be 3,000. As this was to consist of 2,000 males and 1,000 females a larger sample than 3,000 had to be selected initially to produce the required number of males. (It is impractical to select samples of males or females separately from the Electoral Register.) Its size obviously depended on the ratio of males to females aged 17 years and over in the population. This ratio was found to be 1:1.4 (obtained from the Registrar General's 'Annual Estimates for Scotland, 1971').

Thus, if n is the initial sample size, then $n = 2{,}000 + 1.14\,(2{,}000) = 4280$

It was therefore expected that the initial sample would consist of 2,000 males and 2,280 females. However, the number of females required in the set sample was 1,000, ie 1 in 2.28 of the females in the initial sample. (See Table D.1).

Table D.1

Size of main sample

	Initial sample		Set sample	
Sex	E	A	E	A
Males	2000	2034	2000	2034
Females	2280	2219	1000	969
Total	4280	4253†	3000	3003†

E = Expected sample
A = Actual sample

† *This figure does not agree with the expected figure (4280) because of random sampling variation.*

D.3 Population

The Electoral Register provides the most convenient frame of the adult population. Thus, the sample consisted of all persons who were eligible for inclusion on the 1972/73 Electoral Register for Scotland (including the Orkneys, Shetlands and Outer Hebrides), ie persons who were aged 17 years and over in February 1972, and who would therefore have been 17½ years or over when fieldwork commenced in September.

Although it cannot be claimed that the Register contains a 100% coverage of those eligible to vote, the deficiency is known to be greatest in the case of 17-21 year olds. As this age group was considered to be of particular interest in the context of the survey, it was important that it should not be under-represented. Consequently, it was decided to select a supplementary sample of young persons who were missing from the Register but who were eligible for inclusion (see Section D.5).

D.4 Main sample design

1) Stratification

It was expected that drinking habits might vary both in different regions and according to the density of population in different areas. The sample, therefore, was stratified by two main factors, namely, region and area type (see Table D.2).

(i) Region - the population was divided into the eight standard regions [1]. Highlands, North-eastern, Eastern, Central, South-eastern, Western, Border and South-western.

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[1] *The regional boundaries were virtually the same as those which came into existence in May, 1975 when the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1973 became effective.*

(ii) Area type - this factor separated the population into four groups: Clydeside connurbation, Major cities (ie Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Dundee), Other urban areas and landward (ie rural) areas.

Within the urban areas in each region, local authorities were listed in alphabetical order of county, and in the landward areas they were ranked in descending order of population density (since data for the landward local authorities were available).

2) Primary sampling units

Of the two most readily available types of unit - local authorities and constituencies - the former were selected as they could more easily be defined by region and area type (constituency boundaries sometimes overlap regional boundaries and considerable variation is found in their urban:rural composition).

The 100 primary sampling units were distributed proportional to the size of the electorate in each region and area type cell (see Table D.2). In each cell, the appropriate number of local authorities was selected systematically, with probability proportional to the size of the electorate. Where the electorate was greater than the sampling interval the local authority had more than one chance of selection. Of the 67 different local authorities selected, 8 were selected more than once, Glasgow being selected 17 times.

3) Intermediate sampling units

An intermediate stage of sampling was introduced, so that the fieldwork could be confined to areas of convenient size and costs kept within the required limits.

In urban areas the second stage units were wards, and in landward areas, groups of parishes or electoral divisions [1]. In each local authority selected at the first stage two second stage units were selected systematically with probability proportional to size of electorate. Where a local authority was selected more than once, two intermediate units were selected for each primary selection.

4) Final sampling units

The final stage consisted of the selection of a sample of electors within each selected ward or electoral division. A sample of electors could be obtained either by selecting "addresses" or "named persons": the latter method was adopted as it avoided the necessity for doorstep sampling, and allowed greater control of the set sample size.

To compensate for differences between the expected and actual distributions of the primary sampling units, the number of electors selected in each intermediate unit was constant within cells, but varied slightly between cells. This would make the overall probability of selection of electors uniform. With an initial sample size of 4,280 electors, and 100 primary units, an average of 21 electors were selected systematically in each intermediate unit.

As the set sample was to consist of twice as many males as females, the required proportion (1 in 2.28, see Section D.2) of females was selected from the initial sample at random. The male:female ratio in the initial sample differed slightly from that expected, and the actual composition of the set sample was 2,034 males and 969 females (see Table D.3). Clearly, re-weighting of the data would be necessary to enable the results for males and females to be combined (see Section D.6).

D.5 Supplementary sample design

It is known that a proportion of young persons in the 17-21 years age group, particularly those aged 17-18 years, are missing from the Electoral Register. As this age group was of interest in the context of the survey, steps had to be taken to include them.

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[1] *In Scotland, "landward" local authorities are divided into parishes and/or electoral divisions.*

Table D.2 Distribution of electorate in Scotland by region and area type showing the expected and actual distributions of primary sampling units

Region	Area type														
	Conurbation			Major cities			Other urban areas			Landward areas			All areas		
	N	E	A	*N*	E	A	*N*	E	A	*N*	E	A	*N*	E	A
Highland							*51*	1.4	2	*72*	2.0	2	*123*	3.4	4
North-eastern				*134*	3.7	4	*78*	2.1	2	*104*	2.8	3	*316*	8.7	9
Eastern				*129*	3.6	3	*122*	3.4	3	*69*	1.9	2	*320*	8.8	8
Central							*108*	3.0	3	*77*	2.1	2	*185*	5.1	5
South-eastern				*342*	9.4	9	*205*	5.6	6	*179*	4.9	5	*725*	19.9	20
Western	*572*	15.7	16	*636*	17.4	17	*315*	8.6	9	*264*	7.3	7	*1786*	49.1	49
Border							*45*	1.2	1	*30*	0.8	1	*75*	2.1	2
South-western							*53*	1.5	1	*55*	1.5	2	*109*	3.0	3
Scotland	*572*	15.7	16	*1241*	34.1	33	*977*	26.8	27	*849*	23.3	24	*3639*	100	100

N = 1971/72 electorate (rounded in thousands)
E = Expected number of primary sampling units
A = Actual number of primary sampling units selected

It was therefore decided to include, in a supplementary sample, unregistered persons aged 17½-21[1] years living in households containing an elector selected in the main sample. The sampling methodology was such that selection of households was with probability proportional to the number of electors. If unregistered persons at *all* such households were interviewed, their probability of selection would also be variable and would not be directly additive to the main sample.

To ensure that unregistered persons aged 17½-21 years had the correct probability of selection, all such persons were taken from households *only* where the elector selected in the main sample was found to be the Head of the Household.

D.6 Re-weighting the sample

1) Main sample

The probability of selecting a female, given that she had been included in the initial sample, was 1 in 2.28. Therefore, to enable the data for males and females to be additive, the latter would need to be re-weighted by the inverse of this probability.

2) Supplementary sample

Since females, including female Heads of Households, in the main sample were weighted up to make them additive to males, all young persons, male or female, selected in the supplementary sample and living in a household with a female Head were also re-weighted by the same factor, so that the data from both samples would be additive.

D.7 Response analysis

1) Revised set sample

The set sample consisted of 3,003 electors, identified as 2,034 males and 969 females when sampled. At the field stage, it was discovered that it actually consisted of 1,991 males, 1,010 females and 2 ineligibles - referred to as the revised set sample (see Table D.4). This small discrepancy between the numbers of men and women actually interviewed and the numbers listed was caused by difficulties in identifying the sex of electors from the Register.

2) Response

In the main sample, 2,412 interviews were achieved - a response rate of 80%. The response rates for males and females were virtually the same: 80% and 81% respectively (see Table D.4).

A total of 48 unregistered young people aged 17½-21 years were identified and included in the supplementary sample. Of these, 41 (85%) were interviewed.

An analysis of refusals and non-contacts is given in Table D.5.

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[1] *To be eligible for inclusion on the 1972/73 Register, a person must reach the age of 18 years by February 1973. Therefore persons aged 17 years at the time of fieldwork (September 1972) were interviewed only if their birthday had occurred before February 1972.*

Table D.3

Distribution of electors in the set sample† by sex, region and area type

Region		Area type				
		Conurbation	Major cities	Other urban areas	Landward areas	All areas
Highland	Males			32	38	70
	Females			11	20	31
	Total			43	58	101
North-eastern	Males		84	38	62	184
	Females		33	23	26	82
	Total		117	61	88	266
Eastern	Males		65	54	42	161
	Females		40	39	17	96
	Total		105	93	59	257
Central	Males			65	50	115
	Females			26	18	44
	Total			91	68	159
South-eastern	Males		198	109	99	406
	Females		87	57	48	192
	Total		285	166	147	598
Western	Males	340	334	185	139	998
	Females	151	172	80	71	474
	Total	491	506	265	210	1472
Border	Males			22	18	40
	Females			13	7	20
	Total			35	25	60
South-western	Males			27	33	60
	Females			16	14	30
	Total			43	47	90
Scotland	Males	340	681	532	481	2034
	Females	151	332	265	221	969
	Total	491	1013	797	702	3003

† *After eliminating the required proportion of females*

Table D.4

Main and supplementary samples: Analysis of response by sex

	Males		Females		Total	
(a) Main	%	*No.*†	%	*No.*†	%	*No.*†
Achieved sample	80	*1595*	81	*817*	80	*2412*
Refusals	9	*180*	11	*115*	10	*295*
Non-contacts	11	*216*	8	*78*	10	*294*
Revised set sample	100	*1991*	100	*1010*	100	*3001*††
(b) Supplementary						
Achieved	78	*18*	92	*23*	85	*41*
Refusals	17	*4*	8	*2*	12	*6*
Non-contacts	4	*1*	-	-	2	*1*
Number of young persons	100	*23*	100	*25*	100	*48*

† *Actual figures (numbers have not been weighted).*
†† *The two ineligibles have been excluded.*

3) Proportion of young persons missing from the Register

After re-weighting, the total number of young persons aged 17½-21 interviewed was 325.3. Of these, 277.9 persons came from the main sample and 47.4 from the supplementary sample, which suggests that about 15% of respondents aged 17½-21 had not been registered (possibly some of these could have been registered elsewhere). The age details of non-respondents were unreliable, and therefore were not used.

To check whether there were any marked differences in this age group between the sample and the population data, the age distribution of the main and supplementary samples combined and reweighted were compared with both the 1971 Census and the 1972 mid-year population estimates (as fieldwork commenced in September 1972). The results, given in Table D.6, show that no appreciable differences were found.

Table D.5

Main and supplementary samples combined: Analysis of refusals and non-contacts by sex

(a) Refusals	Males		Females		Total	
Reasons for refusal	%	*No.*†	%	*No.*†	%	*No.*†
Anti 'subject matter'	30	*56*	26	*30*	29	*86*
Anti 'all surveys'	18	*33*	20	*23*	19	*56*
Anti 'Government'	2	*3*	2	*2*	2	*5*
Genuinely too ill	13	*24*	22	*26*	17	*50*
Genuinely too busy	5	*10*	3	*3*	4	*13*
Other reasons	3	*5*	4	*5*	3	*10*
No identifiable reason	29	*53*	24	*28*	27	*81*
Total	100	*184*	100	*117*	100	*301*

(b) Non-contacts	Males		Females		Total	
Reasons for non-contact	%	*No.*†	%	*No.*†	%	*No.*†
No reply from 4 or more calls	13	*28*	13	*10*	13	*38*
Away from home all survey period	12	*25*	5	*4*	10	*29*
Moved - cannot be traced	34	*73*	35	*27*	34	*100*
Emigrated within Great Britain	11	*24*	17	*13*	13	*37*
Emigrated outside Great Britain	10	*22*	8	*6*	9	*28*
Deceased	21	*45*	23	*18*	21	*63*
Total	100	*217*	100	*78*	100	*295*

† *Actual figures (numbers have not been weighted)*

Table D.6

Main and supplementary samples combined: Age distribution of young persons compared with 1971 Census and 1972 mid-year population estimates

Age	Achieved sample	1971 Census†	1972 mid-year population††
	%	%	%
17½	0.8	1.1	1.1
18	2.1	2.1	2.1
19	2.3	2.0	2.1
20	2.2	2.0	2.0
21	1.9	2.1	2.0
17½ - 21	9.3	9.3	9.3
Base = All those aged 17½ and over	*3505.0*	*3,671,590*	*3,664,400*

† *1971 Census, Scotland*
†† *Registrar General's Annual Estimates for Scotland 1972*

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